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the Mennonite

January 9, 2001

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Dare to become a global church

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

God and government

Thanks for the very relevant editorial on Romans 13:1-7 ("God Gave Us This Government?" Dec. 12). I do remember sermons on that passage from my father, a pastor in Lancaster Conference. He used that passage to suggest that loyalty to civil authority, within limits, was appropriate for Mennonite Christians. He also emphasized that allegiance to country is always subject to a higher allegiance to God and that there are times when Christians are called to follow Jesus even if that means disobeying a country's laws.

The editorial said Romans 13:1-7 suggests "that God gave us the electoral college system and the people who are currently in power." I have serious questions about that statement. It is dangerous to suggest that the status quo came from God, particularly when we are in a position of power. God, in God's sovereignty, has given people freedom to make meaningful choices, not merely to act as puppets on strings God pulls. God can, of course, intervene any time God chooses, but most of the time God doesn't. God allows us real freedom to decide and freedom to live with the consequences of our choices, good and bad.

What Romans 13:1-7 suggests is that God ordained the principle of authority, not that God chose the people in authority. God created the world so that it works best if there is structured authority, not only in civil society, but also in the home, in organizations and in the church. The Bible says that authority should be used to follow God's will and to serve the common good. It should reflect both justice and mercy. We should respect and honor the principle of authority, the offices of authority and the people who hold the offices. We should obey laws unless they require us to compromise our following Jesus. We should also treat people who hold those offices decently and with love, even if they behave badly or abuse the power associated with their authority.

In a democracy we work under the principle that our government is "of the people, by the people and for the people." This gives us as Christians particular opportunity and responsibility to act as a moral compass for society and to influence public decision making, both with our analysis and our understanding of what makes a good society. We should call people in civil authority to make laws and policies that serve the common good and show particular concern and care for the weak and powerless. We should also call officials to implement laws and policies with justice and mercy and to live personal lives which reflect high levels of morality and integrity. I think we also have a responsibility to vote for people we think will best follow these principles and for some of us to hold appropriate public offices.—*John W. Eby, Dillsburg, Pa.*

Of course God ordains governments. Too bad the Dec. 12 editorial didn't also mention Pol Pot. God's ordination of governments has no bearing on whether we should trust them, whether they follow God's best will or whether we should oppose them. The editorial seems to ignore Jesus' example of opposing the powers. We should be as subject to these powers, as Jesus and Martin Luther King also practiced submission (they did!) to the ruling bigots of their time. And I don't think we should trust the courts, the kings or the voters or anyone but God, but we should use and encourage the good in our political process, including elections.

Being subject to these powers is a way of life (and, potentially, death on the cross like Jesus) as we find the most compassionate route of speaking for the least of these like Jesus did. If we take seriously the process of how Jesus died, as recorded, at least as seriously as why he died, we will see the wrong of those disenfranchised by the inept Florida county electoral process, the Florida Secretary of State and the U.S. Supreme Court. This is wrong. The question that should be asked among us as we follow Christ the Victor is how to address wrongs like this in our society, not just whether to address them. Walter Wink's series of book on "The Powers" takes me back to the Bible in a responsible way with these questions.

Incidentally, I grew up Old Mennonite in eastern Iowa, and I remember sermons on Romans 13:1.—*Dave Graber, Hardin, Mont.*

Everett Thomas in his editorial calls on Mennonites to "relax about the [electoral] outcome" and to "trust the jurisprudence of judges and courts." According to Thomas, while "Mennonites have an important tradition of challenging government" on "matters of conscience," we should not challenge the electoral process.

What does this mean? Does this mean that Mennonites should not challenge a system in which many African-Americans were disen-

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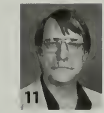
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theMennonite
Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

franchised by hostile poll workers and voting machines that, unlike the more expensive optical scanners found in many white suburban districts, discarded an inordinately high percentage of ballots? Does this mean that we should acquiesce in a political system that does not live up to its "one person, one vote" mythology? What was the civil rights movement if not a challenge to America's electoral processes?

The Florida debacle clearly revealed that our voting procedures are badly tilted against those at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. If Mennonites care—and we should care—about economic and ethnic minorities having access to political power, then of course we should challenge the electoral process as it now exists in the United States.—*Bill Trollinger, Bluffton, Ohio*

Absolutely sure?

Newspaper columnist Ellen Goodman recently commented on the absolute and ambiguous elements of our nation's struggle to determine who will be president. "All along the Bush folks have claimed an absolute win," she said, "while Gore folks were more willing to face an ambiguous reality." The point here is not to discuss the merits of Bush or Gore but to suggest that within the church community exist the same dynamics in the struggle over critical issues. Goodman observes that "absolutists often have anger—if not God—on their side." Few church issues are absolute. Given the limitations of our humanity and the dimness of our spiritual eyes, we do well to give humility preferential treatment with generous servings of love garnished with a dash of inspired humor. Certainly we can forego the anger, even if we are absolutely sure we are right and God is on our side.—*D. Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.*

Cover photo
by Mev Puleo

Marilyn Nolt

To what degree should the sound track of our worship life resemble the sound track of secular life?

—Glenn Lehman, "A Golden Age of Church Music," Dec. 12, 2000

Making music

Thank you, Glenn Lehman, for "A Golden Age of Church Music" (Dec. 12). Someone—I know not who—recently said that in our services today, we sing a few hymns for the older people, some off-the-wall songs for the youth and have a story for the children. We wait for our turn to worship, sort of trying to be gracious as we endure the other forms of worship. Hardly the same sense of unity found in the a cappella singing of the "Golden Age."

Yet that unity of a cappella singing was also a wall for those who came to our churches from non-Mennonite backgrounds. I remember as a youth in a musically literate congregation deliberately sitting beside visitors and singing the melody to free them to more readily join in the singing.

Again, thank you, Glenn. Now for an article on where we should be going with music. Show us the way!—*Maynard Shirk, Conestoga, Pa.*

I enjoyed reading "A Golden Age of Church Music." There were interesting reflections, but I was unable to get beyond the statement, "In church-related schools the choir is a mere specialty competing with jazz and musicals and soccer." I would like to know what background information Lehman uses to make this statement. As a music director in Mennonite schools for 15 years, I have found that this is not the case. I currently teach at a Mennonite school where students in grades six through nine are in choirs. The curriculum includes sight reading using solfège, learning to use the hymnal and song-leading techniques. Students are encouraged to be actively involved in the musical lives of their home congregations.

It is a constant challenge as a Mennonite music educator to fight the cultural trends that stereotype music and musicians. It is unfortunate that Lehman's impressions of Mennonite schools do not support what is actually taking place in many of these institutions.—*J.D. Smucker, Goshen, Ind.*

Middle East reconciliation

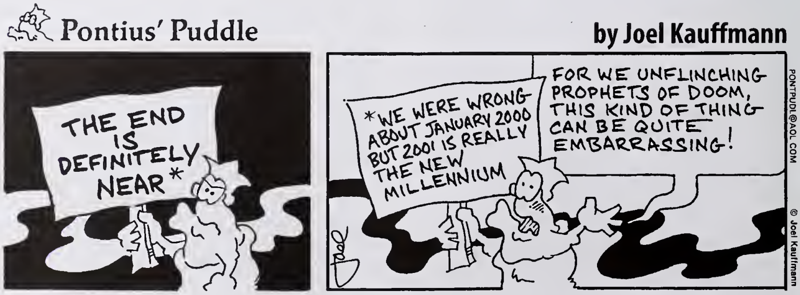
I pray that all of us would identify with Calvin Shenk's emphasis on "reconciliation between Jews and Arabs, particularly in the Israeli-Palestinian context" ("Embrace Ishmael and Isaac," Dec. 5). We can hardly comprehend the enormous power imbalance between Palestinians and Israelis. Palestinian society on the West Bank has been under the severe boot of military occupation since the 1967 war, with enormous American assistance. American Christian prayers for peace are hollow so long as we do not address American military complicity in the injustice against the Palestinians. Reconciliation will mean enormous change in the power imbalance between these two societies, and reconciliation will mean transformation of attitudes toward themselves and toward each other.—*Urbane Peachey, Ephrata, Pa.*

Holes and holiness

How refreshing to read the article by Jim Wallis, my friend and former pastor ("A Bible Full of Holes," Nov. 21). I have heard the "holey" Bible story often, and each time it becomes more poignant. In these days, when our country lacks vision and churches are being divided over issues that are barely mentioned in the Bible, I believe we have an opportunity to come together on common ground to speak out and not ignore these issues of wealth and poverty, which indeed will make our lives, our country and our world more holy.—*Laura Winnen, Portland, Ore.*

Agreeably disagreeable

I liked Ivan Kauffman's suggested steps to keep the tone of letters in Readers Say more constructive and less divisive (Readers Say, Nov. 21). I agree that it sometimes sounds as though we are about to go to war. If we could think in terms of "I disagree" instead of "he is wrong," wouldn't there be less conflict?—*Cora Askren, Goshen, Ind.*


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
THE END IS DEFINITELY NEAR*
*WE WERE WRONG ABOUT JANUARY 2000 BUT 2001 IS REALLY THE NEW MILLENNIUM
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Joel
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On rejecting religion and joining First Mennonite Church

by Amy Spencer

I danced through fields of flagrant flowers
As I twirled in crazed religion
I sought perfection hour by hour
In search of some elusive vision
I would make Him love me then
And dance—an angel on a pin

But flowers turn to broken sticks
And dry, my God became like them
My Fragrant Rose, a spent wick
My Blessed Savior, a cracked stem.
I stilled my thirsty feet—and heard
A cry that spilled without a word

A desperate, sharp and plaintive moan
Flew out of blank air like 10 spears
And suddenly I knew that groan—
It was myself between the years
Of labored dancing, striving toward
This ruined field, this unknown God

My liberty is not in Fact
In word on word and line on line
But in a far more sacred pact—
A covenant of blood like mine.
In all my stamping, flinging fear
I'd reached for One already here

I leave behind my Lawful way
And tear away now-useless weeds
And so I join this church today
And offer questions, giftings, needs
That we may dance the step that teaches
Far deeper than religion reaches

Amy Spencer lives in Riverside, Iowa.

Teresa Pankratz '00

Marilyn Nolt

Dare to become a global church

To become a truly global Mennonite church will mean a radical shift in thinking for North Americans.

by Gilberto Flores

Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.—Mark 16:15

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. —Matthew 28:19a

No one argues now about the universality of the gospel and the imperative to go everywhere with the good news. But for the early believers those words meant certain risks and cultural difficulties.

The disciples had to live through the painful experience of change to understand the scope of the gospel. They also had to recognize the limitations of their cultural boundaries.

The commission to go to every part of the world will always contain weakness and strength—weakness because it is made vulnerable by each encounter with a new reality, and strength because it is enriched with each response to a new culture.

Globalization means searching for common objectives with the church in the South, not fulfilling needs that North Americans perceive, as has been the custom.

The 'other' Mennonites: Cornelius receives the gospel. An Ethiopian is baptized. A church grows in Samaria. Christian communities flourish in Asia Minor among people of Greek ancestry, and Antioch and Ephesus become missionary centers.

"The others" have become part of God's family and heirs of the same commitment to mission. What does this mean for Mennonites?

After the experience of the first Anabaptists, Mennonites turned inward. Some churches stayed alive only by the grace of biological growth. When they decided to open the curtains and unlatch the windows, they found many people were open to the gospel. These "others" embraced the Anabaptist faith with enthusiasm and devotion.

However, these new Mennonites are children of a different reality. They live in different conditions, their search reflects other questions and worries. Violence, poverty, lack of opportunities and political instability mark the experiences of many of these Mennonites. Their faith and practice, ethics and values often differ from that of their spiritual parents.

For our brothers and sisters of other cultures, it is important to assume the life-giving values of the kingdom of God: active pacifism, a prophetic voice, involvement with the social realities of the communities in which they develop their ministry, a productive evangelism and dialogue with other faiths.

Theirs is a spirituality that walks in profanity, a faith that becomes flesh in order to become the "bread of life." The consequences of this kind of faith have been both good and bad. These Mennonites have impacted society and been heard by governments. They have contributed to peace dialogues and lived the ecumenical experience. They have been persecuted and suffered violence and death.

Perhaps this explains why Mennonites of "the South" feel closer to their Anabaptist ancestors who suffered persecution than to their sister churches in North America. Mennonites of the South have had fruitful dialogues about the Bible and Anabaptist history. The dialogue with North America has been mainly a business conversation, an administrative relationship.

This is an uncomfortable situation with many asymmetries:

- political power in the North, political weakness in the South;
- economic power in the North, weakness in the South;
- a church that supports the system in the North, a church in conflict with the system in the South;
- a church inside the dominant culture in the North, a marginal church in the South;

The United States and Canada continue to be great islands. The church in North America has given the impression she can survive without other Mennonites.

- a church that does not evaluate itself critically in the North, a church that is evaluated critically by the reality in the South;
- an established church in the North, a church in progress in the South.

The church in North America has been a blessing to the South; nevertheless these unresolved asymmetries frighten the South even as we walk together.

North American tribalism: The Mennonite identity in North America has strong connections with tribal paradigms. In some ways, it is similar to the Jewish experience.

It speaks of strong family ties and its European Anabaptist inheritance, both in a genealogical and cultural sense. It is not unusual in North America to talk about a frugal Mennonite lifestyle, of Mennonite dress or negotiation styles (based on countless committees). It is seen in the music tradition and the resistance to contemporary worship.

Mennonite identity also has roots in monastic traditions: Simplicity and asceticism are not cultural in a social sense but express the spirituality that drives the Mennonite church and becomes Mennonite culture. Emphases such as peace, justice and service as a lifestyle maintain the special Mennonite profile but are not reflected in the church's walk.

Mennonites of other countries cannot appeal to their Anabaptist genealogy. Their identity has come from different paths. Their walk as a church has forced them to rethink Mennonite theology and the nature of the church.

This is why these brothers and sisters often appeal to diverse traditions of 16th-century Anabaptism to affirm their ideas and actions. It is probably daring of me to say that the best place to reread Anabaptist history and theology is in the South.

North American Mennonites, with some exceptions, have turned Anabaptism into honorable scholasticism to study in seminaries. In the South, Anabaptism sets a course for the practice of faith in daily life; it becomes an evangelism that disturbs the social conscience.

Mennonites of the South use different words to name traditional Mennonite emphases: the aggression of peace, solidarity with the poor as a signal of justice, evangelism as a political voice. Hans Denk, Dirk Philips, Carlstadt and other rebels of the Anabaptist movement become notable figures.

These Mennonites emphasize conversion of the sinner, and they invite new believers to become part of the great project of God. Worship is a celebration of life, not a ceremony that came from the North.

Nevertheless, both sides of the world agree on a common faith, with roots in the gospel of Christ, and in the sense of a global family. They need each other to inspire change and support each other in doing better the things that concern faith and mission to the world.

These Anabaptist legacies, inherited from the same source but interpreted in different ways, should inspire unity. Asymmetries that cannot be changed immediately can be softened, and we can work to abandon ways of working that have created these asymmetries.

What is a global church? The term "globalization" is used to indicate a world united for economy and consumption. It connects the owners of the economy of the poor countries with those of the rich countries and allows greater control of unstable countries. The poor are pawns that serve the global economy.

What motivates the Mennonite church in the North to globalization? How do we do it without following the patterns of the system within which the church exists?

Globalization for the church means to generate hope in a world that gets smaller but at the same time more complex and asymmetric, a world where contradictions make social communities more defensive and skeptical.

Globalization means to be vulnerable in order to learn from others, and at the same time to teach the best we have. It means listening to what the Spirit is saying through different voices. It means cooperation, accountability to others and organizational flexibility demanded by relationships with partners who live in a world where revolutionary changes occur from day to day.

Globalization means searching for common objectives with the church in the South, not fulfilling needs that North Americans perceive, as has been the custom. Globalization means a spirit of humility and an approach without previously established responses. Humility does not use the power of money, education or race to formulate the relationship. Humility is understanding that others also have vision for a global church.

Although Mennonite World Conference is making efforts to value the resources of a global Mennonite church, the United States and Canada continue to be great islands. The church in North America has given the

North American Mennonites have turned Anabaptism into honorable scholasticism. In the South, Anabaptism disturbs the social conscience.

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Dare to become a global church
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impression she can survive without other Mennonites. She has the resources and knows how to use them. Even though this is only partially true, it influences the way Mennonites around the world see the church in the North.

Globalization must ensure that the maturity of the church in other parts of the world is recognized. It should ensure greater fluidity in exchanging resources that already exist in all the churches.

Churches outside North America can make valuable contributions in evangelism, church planting, opening the missionary borders. They also offer examples of suffering and witness for peace.

The church in North America can offer education, service, economic resources and global strategies of work to help other churches understand globalization and bring a systematic approach to church work.

To listen to the church in the South has always been difficult for the North. The same missionary errors continue to be made, with the North's insistence that dependence and subsidy are essential to missions.

The churches of the South want a relationship with the churches of the North, and the North has sent administrators. The churches in the South have asked not to be used as folkloric curiosities or missionary trophies; they demand to be seen as adults in a common faith.

Globalization favors a new incarnation of the church's missionary task. This means the church does not come to the world solely as a mission but as a community already established in a local context. The church is in the world as a witness of the kingdom; its identity is missional.

It is no longer a case of sending missionaries. People who come as missionaries come to a local church that introduces them to mission and makes them incarnate the missionary reality as part of the congregation that has received them.

We need to think theologically about the globalization of the church. Globalization is not a purely functional or structural process. We need to think about the church's role in the contemporary world.

Gilberto Flores is a Guatemalan Mennonite leader now serving as director of Hispanic resource ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church. This article, based on a speech he gave at last summer's annual meeting of Mennonite Church Canada, originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

The same missionary errors continue to be made, with the North's insistence that dependence and subsidy are essential to missions.

Fake Latino

God alone can tell us who we really are.

by Tobin Miller Shearer

Listen in. "My name's Chuck Yoder. I'm from Belize. My wife and I served there six years with Mennonite Central Committee and have now come back to the United States to get our graduate degrees."

"My name's Shirley Friesen. I'm from Nigeria. I served 10 years there and am now studying international health here in Goshen."

"My name's Joe Stoltzfus. I'm from the Philippines. I'm working with Souderton Social Services after serving eight years overseas."

What's wrong with these introductions? Is anything amiss? I think so.

While talking with African-American, Latina and white co-workers recently, we returned to a conversation we've had many times before. Like me, my co-workers are concerned about racism. We long for a church where white people and people of color can worship God together. We envision a place where all peoples, languages, tribes and nations are gathered together before the Lamb (Revelation 7:9) praising and celebrating the One who made such diversity.

But we are not idealists. We know that racism works hard every day to ensure that white people stay in power, set the worship style and get deferred to as the ones in charge. We know that there are many barriers to that Revelation vision.

During this particular take on the topic, we discussed how racism in the United States has a major role in determining our self-understanding. We agreed that racism also creates lots of confusion. One person observed that sometimes we don't even know when our identities have become warped by racism's insidious efforts to tell us who we are.

That's the point in our conversation when we got specific. "Have you noticed," asked one friend, "how some white people come back from overseas service assignments and talk like they're now from that country?"

"I see it all the time," said someone else. "I'll hear white people tell me they're Belizean, Filipino, Nigerian, whatever and actually expect me to believe it's true."

Another co-worker joined in. "My first language was Japanese. I spent years growing up in that country while my father was on a military base, but no one, and I mean no one, has ever suggested that I'm Japanese." She laughed and went on, "If I as an African-American woman even tried to suggest that I'm Japanese, I'd get laughed out of the room

What would it look like for white people to throw off our confusion and act as co-strugglers with people of color, never needing to steal their culture and identity to feel strong, able, unique?

by the same white people who just tried so hard to convince me they're from Uganda."

My co-workers and I continued our conversation about what we refer to as the "fake Latino" syndrome. While I had been uncomfortable with this pattern, I didn't have language to describe it. Giving it a name allowed me to realize just how strange it is that we white people become so easily confused about who we are.

While not the case in every instance, I could think of many times when I had noticed this confusion among former overseas service workers for institutions such as Mennonite Central Committee and other church-based groups involved in international missions.

It was not until the end of our conversation, however, that someone suggested what might be behind this syndrome. This time, another white person spoke. "When we are white," she said, "we lose our connection to history, culture, a people. That leaves a vacuum. Is it any wonder we seek to fill it with all the good stuff we get from hanging out with people of color, either in this country or overseas?" She paused and added, "I'd much rather be white and know where my empty spaces are than pretend to be Latino or African-American, Asian or Native American, and carry that confusion around. I might feel full for awhile, but in the end, I'm going to be just as empty, if not more so, when someone points out to me that I'm not who I say I am."

Her comments jogged my memory. I thought not just of returning overseas workers but of the many young white men I have met on the campuses of Mennonite colleges and high schools who affect the dress styles, physical mannerisms and slang that have originated in the African-American community. I remembered the white members of an urban Mennonite congregation who became intensely angry when it was pointed out to them that there were significant life reality differences between them and the Latino members of their congregation. "We dress alike, talk alike, are alike," the white people insisted, even as Latino partners nearly refused to make eye contact with them and became silent.

During a trip to the Midwest, I heard one white person after another drop references to the Native American rituals they had participated in, Native American dress they had worn and indigenous history they knew. Although not a bad thing by itself, when asked what they had to bring from their culture or what they knew of their history, they had no reply.

I also remembered the many times I have sat through orientation sessions with workers preparing to go overseas who insist their only task is to immerse themselves in the country where they will be placed. When I have suggested that they need also to know themselves as white people, I have been accused of being divisive. Too often these are the same people who later return and claim they are now part of the country they have left.

Our conversation about fake Latinos ended. I walked away wondering about the empty spaces that whiteness has left behind in me.

I wondered what it could look like for white people to throw off our confusion and act as co-strugglers with people of color, never needing to steal their culture and identity to feel strong, able, unique. And I wondered, perhaps most importantly, at the best truth I could know: God is always waiting for me to discover that God alone can really tell me who I am.

Tobin Miller Shearer lives in Lancaster, Pa.

How we celebrate Martin Luther King Day

Last year on Martin Luther King Day I heard newscasters talk primarily about the many volunteer activities going on in their local areas. I heard reports about organizing volunteers to paint schools, clean parks and playgrounds in the ghetto, having blood drives. I felt uneasy but didn't know why, so I made a journal entry about it. I wrote, "Certainly there can't be anything wrong with volunteerism."

As I hear folks planning for Martin Luther King Day 2001, I know why I'm uneasy.

King mobilized folk from all over the country. He is most remembered for his march on Washington, where he spoke those stirring words: "I have a dream. … Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountaintop, let freedom ring. For all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics."

Today, more than 30 years after his murder, rather than talking about racial justice, freedom, or peace and equality, we recruit volunteers to pick up trash in playgrounds, paint schools, build and repair porches. Yet issues of race, justice and human dignity are still critical problems facing our nation.

Are we diluting the legacy of one of America's strongest voices for justice in this century? Certainly I am not against recruiting volunteers to meet the needs of the community most often neglected throughout the year. But …

King strove to end racism in America, not to promote volunteerism. He was not murdered on that balcony for recruiting volunteers. As a nonviolent, anti-racist organizer, King posed a clear threat to injustice everywhere.

Racism is not warm and fuzzy. However, volunteerism can be a fuzzy-bunny approach to issues that are not warm and fuzzy. It's this type of thinking that lulled white America into believing racism is over.

My concern is that King's legacy of working toward racial justice will be lost if this trend toward volunteerism continues. We who are committed to anti-racism should look for ways to reverse this trend. Otherwise we will be guilty of horribly distorting King's legacy.—*Conrad Moore, racism awareness program organizer and peace and justice staff associate for peace education for Mennonite Central Committee U.S. in Akron, Pa.*

Anabaptist world family tops 1.2 million

Churches in Africa and Asia set pace in global growth

STRASBOURG, France—The number of members in the global Anabaptist family of faith continues to grow, with churches outside North America and Europe leading the way, according to the most recent Mennonite World Conference (MWC) directory.

The directory, released last month, reports 1,203,995 baptized members—a 13.6 percent increase over the last two years—in 197 Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and related churches in 63 countries. The previous world estimates, published in MWC's 1998 directory, showed 1,060,143 baptized believers in 192 bodies in 61 countries.

The six countries with the most baptized members are the same as in 1998: United States—319,768, Congo—183,040, Canada—124,150, India—90,006, Indonesia—87,802, Ethiopia—73,219.

Other countries with more than 20,000 members are Germany, Kenya, Paraguay, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Kenya is the only new country on that list, the result of growth in the churches previously counted and the addition of a conference associated with the Conservative Mennonite Conference, headquartered in Irwin, Ohio.

More than 702,000 baptized members are in churches in the global South: Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America-Caribbean. Membership in the churches in the North—Europe and North America—stands at 501,000.

The churches in Africa grew the most since 1998, jumping from 322,708 to 405,979, a gain of 25.8 percent. Membership in Asia-Pacific increased 17.2 percent, going from 157,075 to 184,049. Latin America-Caribbean grew 9.4 percent, from 102,496 to 112,128, while North American membership increased from 415,978 to 443,918, up 6.7 percent.

The European total declined from 61,886 to 57,9121, due in part to a revised estimate of the membership of the independent Mennonite Brethren churches in Germany.

Churches and conferences are included in MWC's directory if they are rooted in the Anabaptist-Mennonite stream of church history or if they are related to such churches. As a result, there is some fluidity in the list. This year for the first time, churches in the Ivory Coast and Togo are included.

Not all the churches included in the directory are MWC members. The organization's current membership includes 87 churches and conferences in 48 countries with a membership of 912,451.

Statistics are usually provided by the national churches or conferences. In some cases the figures are only rough estimates. The methods of counting and reporting vary, says directory editor Elizabeth Baecher. MWC seeks to treat the information it receives as consistently as possible. Changes in totals can mean growth, decline or simply greater accuracy. Wherever possible, attempts are made to increase the reliability of the figures provided. The new directory, for example, reflects better information about the baptized membership figures in the various Mennonite colony groups in Latin America and Canada. The transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada into Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada has changed the count in those two countries.—*Larry Kehler of MWC News Service*

Speaker says war in Iraq continues

The bombing may have stopped. But for children in Iraq, the Gulf War has never ended, says peace activist Kathy Kelly.

"It simply changed, and it changed into a kind of warfare more lethal, more devastating, more brutal than even the worst bombardments that happened then or that continue apace today," Kelly told a Dec. 18 audience at Trinity Mennonite Church in Glendale, Ariz.

Those worsening conditions are due to the economic sanctions against Iraq, she says, noting that malnutrition and infant mortality rates have risen sharply since the Gulf War.

Kelly, a 2000 Nobel Peace Prize nominee, is co-founder of Voices in the Wilderness, an organization working to end the sanctions against Iraq.—*Janet Olson*

CPT photo

Christmas promise

A Dec. 25 rainbow arches over the West Bank towns of Bethlehem and Beit Jala. Two Christian Peacemaker Teams members moved to Beit Jala on Dec. 1 in response to Israeli military attacks in the area.

MCC Thailand worker gets suspended sentence after pleading guilty in illegal-immigrant case

AKRON, Pa.—With positive words for Max Ediger's work, a Thai court has suspended the longtime Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker's punishment for harboring illegal immigrants.

Ediger, who works with the Bangkok-based human-rights organization Burma Issues, in September pleaded guilty and was sentenced to one year in prison and a $250 fine. But the court suspended the sentence and fine, determining Ediger to be of good character and Burma Issues' work to be "beneficial to Thai society and the people."

Ediger

Thai police raided the Burma Issues office last February following the death of a Burmese rebel soldier killed in Thailand when he helped seize a hospital. He had crossed into Thailand illegally and was found with a Burma Issues publication in his pocket, although he was not involved with the organization. Ediger was arrested and held for one day before being released on bail. Police also detained two other MCC workers and nine Burmese trainees, all of whom were questioned and released.

Burma Issues helps Burmese refugees develop creative and nonviolent ways to end war and oppression in their country. More than 60 minority groups in Burma (also called Myanmar) have struggled through civil war and military rule since 1948. Burma Issues' work includes research and documentation of human-rights abuses.

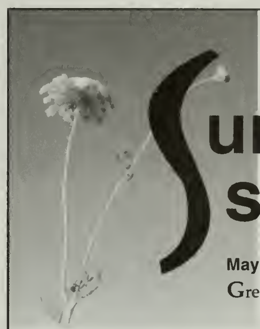
Most refugees who come to Burma Issues for help cannot receive legal travel documents to Bangkok. Since the February raid, the organization has moved its refugee trainings from Bangkok to the Burma-Thailand border.

Burma Issues also plans to register with the Thai government. "We have never been an underground organization," says Ediger, a native of Turpin, Okla., who has served in Thailand in a variety of assignments since 1978.—*MCC News Service*

Kosovar project finished with EMM, VMBM aid

DRENOC, Kosovo—An addition to a Kosovar elementary school was dedicated in November, the latest project financed by Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM). The addition, in the village of Drenoc, is a multipurpose hall for sports and activities.

EMM and VMBM had earlier helped repair homes. Efforts since then have focused on schools, including providing a generator in one village.—*EMM and VMBM news services.*



Summer session 1

May 29-June 30

Greek Readings: Synoptic Gospels
Mary H. Schertz, Ph.D., AMBS

June 4-9

Conflict, Communication, Conciliation
Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, M.A.
Goshen College

Torah and Ethics
Perry Yoder, Ph.D., AMBS

The Church and Race
Gayle Gerber Koontz, Ph.D., AMBS
Michael Banks, Teaching Assistant,
Pastor, King of Glory Tabernacle,
Bronx, New York

Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, D.Min.; AMBS
June Alliman Yoder, D.Min.; AMBS

Mission and Evangelism
Institute Course
June 4-9

Christian Encounters with World Faiths
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS

Continuing Education event
June 2

Unlocking the Mysteries of
Ordinary Time: Worship Planner
Marlene Kropf, D.Min., AMBS
Karmen Krahn Fehr, student, AMBS

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Additional courses are offered June 18-19 and July 30-August 10. Check the AMBS web site for full details: **www.ambs.edu.**

Board raises bar for MMA investments

CHICAGO—Mennonite Mutual Aid wants to reward good corporate behavior rather than simply punishing the bad. So the MMA board has adopted new investment guidelines for the organization's more than $1 billion in assets.

The Stewardship Investing Guidelines, approved at the board's Dec. 1-2 meeting, help MMA evaluate companies according to positive values based on Christian faith, including peace, justice, dignity of all humanity, integrity, fairness, community and stewardship of creation and environment.

The new guidelines expand MMA's longstanding practice of avoiding investments in alcohol, tobacco, gambling and military contracting.

"These guidelines create a model for corporations we want to invest in," says Carol Suter, chair of the committee that shepherded the policy's development. "We know no business is perfect, but we wanted to raise our expectations high. Our last guidelines simply steered us clear of the typical corporate sin stocks. … They set the bar too low."

The primary use of the guidelines will be to help choose and monitor investments, including MMA Praxis Mutual Funds, Mennonite Foundation and Mennonite Retirement Trust. Staff can apply these values when evaluating a new investment by asking questions such as whether the company

- treats its global workforce fairly and humanely;
- demonstrates commitment to communities in which it operates;
- follows environmental standards in producing its products;
- produces products or services that do not contribute to violence in society.

The guidelines will also direct MMA's growing corporate advocacy work, such as its current leadership of a coalition urging AT&T to reconsider its proposed partnership with a pornography cable provider.

The guidelines were created with the assistance of a committee that included not only MMA board members but also five representatives from Anabaptist academic, theological and business communities. This group also sponsored an open forum on business ethics to gain perspectives from a wide range of people before the guidelines were drawn up.

The board also heard from a study of growth trends among the 81 fraternal societies nationwide. The study found that MMA's fraternal organization, Mennonite Mutual Aid Association, was the fastest-growing fraternal among 81 societies. MMAA ranked first the last five years and in the last 20 years. The study was commissioned by the National Fraternal Congress, the trade organization for fraternal societies.—*MMA News Service*

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Longtime Africa worker still challenged

ELKHART, Ind.—Annelise Goldschmidt arrived in Ivory Coast in November 1979. And she is still there.

"I didn't know at that time that I was going to spend most of my life overseas as a single person for [God] and his service," says Goldschmidt, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker. "I felt God had different plans for me that I never dreamed of."

From 1979 to 1989, Goldschmidt worked as co-principal at a young women's boarding school in Man, about 37 miles from the capital, Abidjan. Since 1990, she has lived in Abidjan serving as guesthouse manager at the Evangelical Training Center for Communication in Africa.

"To get the chance to meet people from almost all over the world and be a part of an American mission is a great privilege for me as a European," Goldschmidt says.

She grew up in Basel, Switzerland, and is a member of Mennoniten Gemeinde in Basel-Holee, Switzerland. Goldschmidt's mission experiences en route to Ivory Coast included two years of secretarial work in a Bible school in Switzerland, working as a trainee with Mennonite Central Committee in Quebec for one year, then working as a teacher on the French Island of New Caledonia for two years.

"The Lord took me around the world," Goldschmidt says. "Since then, I've experienced so much and discovered so much about God's goodness and love."

At times, it's difficult not to compare her native cultural mores to those in the Ivory Coast. When she finds herself doing so, Goldschmidt reminds herself of the values, strengths and weaknesses of each. She particularly enjoys how Africans use more outward expressions of faith, which has helped her discover God in new ways.

"Africans in general are expressing their faith in a more lively, explosive way," Goldschmidt says. "Sometimes in dancing, sometimes in crying … in a more community-oriented way."

Goldschmidt's position as guesthouse manager includes renting the center to various Christian groups and supervising the cleaning, repairs and kitchen operations. She also serves as Goshen (Ind.) College's contact person for its Study-Service Term program in Ivory Coast, which annually brings a group of students to the country for 13 weeks. Goldschmidt also helps with a women's group, called Servantes de Béthanie, which offers biblical training and outreach to women.

"It is quite difficult to challenge women to come regularly to those meetings," Goldschmidt says. "The political situation in the last months has made things even worse."

Ivory Coast's military dictator, Gen. Robert Gueï, was ousted in a popular uprising Oct. 25. The wake of his fall has unleashed religious and ethnic riots and killings. To date, there appears to be no end to the nation's political turmoil.—*Amy Gingerich for MBM News Service*

Correction: The cost of Ethiopian Evangelical Church's new meetinghouse in New York was $395,000. The figure was incorrect in the Nov. 14, 2000, issue.

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One of the greatest needs at pastor Antonio Nhancule's Spirit of Charity Church in Maputo, Mozambique was for economic development—people weren't earning enough to provide for their families. He asked MEDA to help; as a result, 30 people received loans to improve their small businesses. Today pastor Antonio says there is visible economic improvement for his members. "They are better able to feed their children and send them to school," he says.

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Missiologists hear of small's strength

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Smallness has been an advantage for Mennonites in mission work, Jonathan Bonk told the Association of Anabaptist Missiologists in a Dec. 7-9 meeting at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg.

Some 30 mission teachers, writers and practitioners from various Mennonite groups took part in the meeting, which was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions. Bonk, a Mennonite who is director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Conn., spoke on "The Contribution of Anabaptist Mission Thinking and Practice to the Wider Church."

"In the total scheme of global church and mission, Mennonites play a conspicuously modest role," Bonk said. "Numerically, we're inconsequential."

Yet he noted, "God uses small things." Smallness has allowed Mennonites to be a bridge between groups without being perceived as a threat, he said.

At the same time, Bonk warned against a "self-congratulatory righteousness" about Mennonite missions. While being small and foolish can be a virtue, he said, "it's possible not only to be foolish but stupid."

In a response to Bonk's presentation, Nancy Heisey, chair of the Bible department at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), said that Mennonites "haven't done well" at including women in the missiological conversation. Heisey, who is also president-elect of Mennonite World Conference, also said that North American Mennonites have not done a good job of developing colleagues among national churches or allowing the mission concerns of those churches to be heard.

In a second major presentation, EMU Bible professor Linford Stutzman lamented the state of mission education at Mennonite colleges and seminaries, saying they "are ill-equipped" to train students to be mission "enthusiasts."

"Evangelism is an embarrassment" in a pluralistic society, Stutzman observed, "acutely so in academia."

Also at the meeting, participants discussed missiology and publishing projects.—*David E. Graybill*

> In the total scheme of global church and mission, Mennonites play a conspicuously modest role.
>
> —*Jonathan Bonk*

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Peace advocate, Goshen professor dies at 86

GOSHEN, Ind.—Longtime peace advocate Atlee Beechy died Dec. 31 in Goshen following a bout with cancer. He was 86.

Beechy was professor and administrator at Goshen College from 1949 to 1983, serving as professor of education, psychology and peace studies and as dean of students and director of counseling services. But his influence extended far beyond campus. Beechy was a member of the Mennonite Central Committee executive committee from 1961 to 1982. In 1966, he directed Vietnam Christian Service, a relief and refugee program of MCC and other Protestant agencies. He helped start China Educational Exchange, which he directed from 1981 to 1982. He co-founded Seniors for Peace in 1987.

India church celebrates century of baptism

DHAMTARI, India—A year after commemorating the centennial of Mennonite missionaries in India, the Mennonite Church in India celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first baptisms.

The Mennonite Church in India celebrated Dec. 23 with a service of blessing and thanksgiving, including baptisms. A centennial tree was planted and a centennial stone placed on the grounds of the first church.

"On Dec. 23, 1900, Rev. J.A. Ressler baptized 43 youth in Dhamtari," said Pramod K. Singh, moderator of the Mennonite Church in India. "Thus the Sunderganj Mennonite Church in Dhamtari was established for the Lord's glory."

Ressler and William and Alice Page arrived in Dhamtari in November 1899, the first Mennonite Church missionaries. The first General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries arrived the following year.—*MBM News Service*

MCC aids Ugandan hospital fighting Ebola

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee has jumped into the war against the Ebola virus in Uganda as one of the country's frontline fighters continues to suffer casualties. MCC is sending $25,000 to keep Lacor Hospital in northern Uganda running. MCC also organized an emergency airlift of 24,000 pairs of surgical gloves.

The hospital last month lost its chief of staff to the disease, which has demoralized Lacor's staff. In addition, patients who normally come to the hospital are staying away. With fewer patients, Lacor is rapidly losing money.

"Ebola is not only killing the people, it's killing the only hospital in the region," says Tesfa Dalellew, MCC Africa program co-director.—*MCC News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Jan. 9, 1970—The last two Mennonite Central Committee workers leave Biafra, three days before the 3-year-old secessionist country surrenders to Nigeria.

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- **Snowbird Service Opportunity in Jamaica** (January 26-February 4 *with Ross and Erma Shantz*)
- **Vietnam** (February 9-26 *with Luke Martin and Henry Landes*)
- **Australia & New Zealand** (February 10-March 4 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel *(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

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Events

Mennonite Disaster Service all-unit meeting, Feb. 8-10, Winkler, Man. For information, contact MDS at 204-261-6381.

"Calling the Called" conference, Feb. 23-24, Hesston, Kan.; part of the Anabaptist Vision & Discipleship Series, sponsored by Hesston College. For information, contact Palmer Becker at 316-327-8290 or <palmerb@hesston.edu>.

Puerto Rico Conference annual meeting, March 8-11.

22nd annual Family History Conference, March 30-31, Lancaster, Pa., sponsored by Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society and Lancaster County Historical Society. For information, contact Lola M. Lehman at 717-393-9745. Registration deadline is March 17.

Births

Bacher, Daniel James, Dec. 10, to Kelli (Mettler) and Kevin Bacher, Crater Lake, Ore.

Beachy, Elise Elizabeth, Nov. 18, to John and Kathy (Sneary) Beachy, Kokomo, Ind.

Bontrager, Cassie Ann, Nov. 29, to Daphine (Reno) and Merlin Bontrager, Sarasota, Fla.

Edgar, Andrew Mark, Nov. 14, to Christopher and Susan (McLennan) Edgar, Kitchener, Ont.

Fairfield, Mary Kathryn, Dec. 12, to Christine (Glick) and Joshua Fairfield, Chicago.

Farrington, Kierstin Layne, Nov. 10, to James and Tricia (Peifer) Farrington, Lancaster, Pa.

Godshall, Emma Kate, Nov. 9, to Mike and Teresa (Anders) Godshall, Harleysville, Pa.

Good, Brendan Andrew, Nov. 22, to Andy and Kara (Payto) Good, Canton, Ohio.

Harder, Nathan Daniel Diller, Nov. 23, to Rachel and Mark Diller Harder, Kitchener, Ont.

Haven, Gage Merit, Nov. 19, to Darrell and Wendy (Steiner) Haven, Apple Creek, Ohio.

Kaufman-Frey, Annika, Dec. 5, to Cameron and Dawn Kaufman-Frey, Morgantown, W.Va.

Leichty, Matthew Roy, Dec. 1, to Garry and Karen (Roth) Leichty, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Melanson, Madeleine Hazel Snowdon, Nov. 24, to Jeffrey and Jennifer (Snowdon) Melanson, Kitchener, Ont.

Mercurio, Alyssa Michelle, Oct. 24, 2000, received for adoption Nov. 1, 2000, by Brad and Lisa (Thomas) Mercurio, Bedford, Ohio.

Miller, Kristina Lynn, July 12, 1994, received for adoption Dec. 20, 2000, by Arbo (Stutzman) and Terry Miller, Harrisonburg, Va.

Moyer, Erin Elizabeth, Dec. 7, to Diana (Renner) and Douglas Moyer, Souderton, Pa.

Reimer, Aaron Yantzi, Nov. 24, to John Reimer and Lorie Yantzi, Shakespeare, Ont.

Rempel, Raina Delaney, Kadri Josephine and Bronwyn Sydney (triplets), Dec. 5, to Curtis and Jackie (Peters) Rempel, Steinbach, Man.

Marriages

Burkholder/Martin: Brian Burkholder, Sturgis, Mich., and Linda Martin, Sturgis, Oct. 28, at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Callau/Nafziger: Carmelo Callau, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, and Linda Nafziger, Wauseon, Ohio, Dec. 9 at Santa Cruz.

Fitzwater/Miller: Erin Fitzwater, Indianapolis, and Josh Miller, Washington, Ill., Nov. 4, at Indianapolis.

Gingerich/Hostetler: Betty Gingerich, Plain City, Ohio, and Mark Hostetler Jr., Plain City, Dec. 2 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.

Giurgiu/Musselman: Bianca Giurgiu, Kitchener, Ont., and Paul Musselman, Kitchener, Nov. 7 at Jamaica.

Hardgrave/Johnson: Reed Hardgrave, Dallas, and Sonya Johnson, Moundridge, Kan., Dec. 17 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Parker/Petersheim: Susan Parker, Lancaster, Pa., and Robert Petersheim, Lancaster, Nov. 4 at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Pool/Scott: Kelly Pool, Eagle, Colo., and John Scott, Eagle, Nov. 18, at The Old Church, Leadville, Colo.

Reffett/Younts: Nichole Reffett, LaGrange, Ind., and Benjamin Younts, Constantine, Mich., Dec. 9, at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Deaths

Birky, Elsie Gingerich, 88, Hebron, Ind., died Nov. 18. Parents: Andrew and Mary Martin Gingerich (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Shirley Wengerd, Melvin, Merritt, Curt, Thomas; 17 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 22 at Kouts, Ind.

Bixler, Elvina Berg, 88, Lakeland, Fla., died Dec. 10. Spouse: Earl Bixler (deceased). Parents: Phillip and Sarah Berg (deceased). Survivors: son Donald; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Dick, Henry, 89, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 5. Spouse: Ruth Smith Dick. Parents: Peter and Katherina Bergen Dick (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Carolyn Emmert, Nancy Harms, Debra Friesen; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 9 at Metamora, Ill.

Friesen, Alvin, 86, Reedley, Calif., died Dec. 11. Spouse: Winifred Friesen (deceased). Parents: David and Anna Friesen (deceased). Survivors: children Barbara Roupp, Donald; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 15 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Glick, James, 52, Lewistown, Pa., died Dec. 9 of a heart attack. Spouse: Betty Goss Glick. Parents: Norman and Sarah (stepmother) Glick. Other survivor: son Tyler. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Good, Esther Hartzler, 86, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 10. Spouse: Irvin Good (deceased). Parents: Simon and Magdalene Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Helen, Edith Kanagy, Wilbur; 18 grandchildren; four stepgrandchildren; 13 stepgreat-grandchildren; three stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hostetler, Mary Gingerich, 81, Plain City, Ohio, died Dec. 3 of heart failure. Spouse: Abe Hostetler. Parents: Jonas and Katie Gingerich (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Steve; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.

Klassen, Heinrich, 79, Steinbach, Man., died Dec. 3. Spouse: Helen Klassen. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Krehbiel, Philip, 100, Freeman, S.D., died Nov. 27. Spouse: Alvina Kaufman Krehbiel (deceased). Parents: Peter and Anna Goering Krehbiel (deceased). Survivors: children Ray, Janis Siemens, Philip Jr.; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 2 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Lapp, Ruth Ann, 85, West Liberty, Ohio, died Dec. 3. Parents: Alvin and Bena Augspurger Lapp (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 6 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Liller, Lila Moreland, 76, Short Gap, W.Va., died Nov. 16. Spouse: Charles Liller. Parents: Cleveland and Anna Pearl Culp Moreland (deceased). Other survivors: children Constance Lark, Darlene Steward, Larry, Steven, Dennis; 16 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, George, 84, New Holland, Pa., died Nov. 27. Spouse: Grace Kulp Miller. Parents: John and Niva Christner Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Jay Mark, Daniel, Philip, Ruth, Rachel, Miriam; 12 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at New Holland Spanish Mennonite Church.

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Miller, LaMar, 62, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 31 of cancer. Spouse: Eloise Miller. Parents: Cletus and Ella Miller. Other survivors: children Kevin, Karlene Short, Lynn; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Tedrow (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Moreland, Carl, 78, Pinto, Md., died Nov. 24. Spouse: Virginia Dayton Moreland. Parents: Cleveland and Anna Pearl Culp Moreland (deceased). Other survivors: children Esta Yoder, Gail Rotruck, Craig, Christ. Funeral: Nov. 27 at Pinto Mennonite Church.

Richer, Alice Wyse, 90, Wauseon, Ohio, died Dec. 10. Spouse: Walter Richer (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Emma Wyse (deceased). Survivors: children Virgil, Leonard, LaJane Yoder, Ilene Nofziger, Shirley Martin; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Richer, Willard, 89, Wauseon, Ohio, died Dec. 10. Spouse: Clara Short Richer (deceased). Parents: Henry and Marty Aeschliman Richer (deceased). Survivors: children Roland, Velda Rufenacht, Aldine Holsopple, Larry; 16 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 15 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Risser, Ralph, 80, Mesa, Ariz., died Dec. 7 of injuries from an auto accident. Spouse: Irene Risser. Parents: Lester and Viola Wagner Risser (deceased). Other survivors: children Diane Hoedel, Ron, Scott; six grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Sauder, Melvin, 92, Archbold, Ohio, died Dec. 9. Spouse: Lela Sauder (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Katie Nofziger Sauder (deceased). Survivors: children Gene, Danelda Brenneman, Barbara Spiess; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 14 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Temple, MacLoren, 92, Emporia, Kan., died Dec. 13. Spouse: Marie Ann Frey Temple (deceased). Parents: William and Emma Bertha McHaley Temple (deceased). Survivors: children Delores Deschner, Shirley Slaymaker; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Emporia.

Wedel, Margaret, 94, Reedley, Calif., died Dec. 2 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: William Wedel (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 6 at Reedley.

Wiebe, Helen Thimm, 91, Beatrice, Neb., died Dec. 3. Spouse: John Wiebe (deceased). Parents: John and Emilie Penner Thimm (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, James; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Yoder, Donald, 85, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 7. Spouse: Nettie Stutzman Yoder. Parents: Lewis and Arvilla Gingerich Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Joy Hess, Fred, Martha Graber, Mary Glick; 14 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Sadie Rebecca King, 98, Wellman, Iowa, died Dec. 11. Spouse: Kores Yoder (deceased). Parents: David and Hettie Yoder King (deceased). Survivors: children Marvin, Wilmer, Anna Mary. Funeral: West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Zook, Ira, 65, Athens, Ohio, died Nov. 27. Spouse: Joan Esch Zook. Parents: Ira Sr. and Ethel Detwiler Zook (deceased); stepmother: Ruby Martin Zook. Other survivors: children Katrina, Thomas. Memorial service: Dec. 3 at First Presbyterian Church, Athens.

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or ljohns@ambs.edu.

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- **Roots & Wings Community School** seeks married couple to work as ***foster parents and math/science teacher(s)*** at farm and wilderness-based new charter public school on 700 acres near Taos, N.M. 505-737-5826

- **Dare to think?** Like a challenge? ***Anabaptism: A Dying Candle*** by W. Goossen, intro by Dr. John Redekop; $7.45 U.S.; no tax, no shipping charge. Phone 905-627-8082; email <ephraim@bserv.com>.

- **Friendship Community** has an opening for ***program coordinator and program supervisor***. This is an opportunity to impact a life and enrich your own. If you possess a college degree and at least 2 years of experience with people with mental retardation, please call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Central Plains Mennonite Conference** seeks people for the following positions: ***conference minister, central treasurer, executive secretary*** and ***missions minister***.

  Send MLI/resume and letter of interest by Jan. 15, 2001, to CPMC, Box 101, Freeman, SD 57029; fax 605-925-7293. For more information, contact Sharon Waltner, 605-648-3224; <kwaltmin@gwtc.net>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Edmonton, Alta., is looking for a full-time ***pastor*** to commence Aug. 15, 2001. We are a multigenerational, urban congregation of 200+ members and adherents.

  For further information or to submit an application, please contact Adela Wedler, Chair, Pastoral Leadership Transition Committee, 1903–111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>.

- **No Longer Alone Ministries** seeks ***executive director***. Organization provides Christian-based ministry to people with mental illness, families and congregations in the Lancaster, Pa., area; supported living program, family support group and education. Experience in program and staff development and administration required. Prefer awareness of and experience with long-term mental illness. Full- or part-time will be considered.

  Send resume or contact Ruth Detweiler, 222 N. 11th St., Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-2806; <ruthkd@juno.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces an opening for the ***director of the adult degree completion program*** in Lancaster, Pa. Master's degree in a field related to management and organization or adult education. Doctorate preferred. Experience in management and administration essential. Experience in adult education and marketing highly desirable. Candidates must be supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Beryl Brubaker, Academic Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **The Entrepreneur Loan Center** seeks a ***project director*** to lead its microenterprise program connected with Colorado MEDA and the La Jara MVS unit. For more information, contact Kendra Snyder, P.O. Box 984, Alamosa, CO 81140; 719-589-5192; email <elc@slvccs.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks 3/4- to full-time, one-year ***vocal/choral faculty position*** for fall 2001. Master's degree required, doctorate preferred. Area of specialization: voice; area of competence: choral conducting. Experience with college-level students desirable. Evidence of teaching excellence and performance experience preferred. Responsibilities include private voice instruction, conducting University Chorale and Chamber Singers, possible teaching of church music courses and other music courses as needed, according to applicant's strengths. Must be familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Nine-month contract; salary and rank determined by education and experience.

  Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>; web <http://www.emu.edu>. Review begins Feb. 1. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***director of athletics***. Responsible for all aspects of the intercollegiate athletic program. The director provides vision, leadership and advocacy for the overall program including planning, organizing, recruiting, staffing, evaluation and assessment. Oversees the efficient management of fiscal resources and facilities, demonstrates a commitment to academic integrity, gender equity, diversity and complies with Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules and regulations. Will work in conjunction with university advancement and enrollment and marketing to represent the department in public relations, fund raising and recruiting/retention. Advanced degree in physical education, sports management or related field. Master's required, doctorate preferred. Expected to have superior interpersonal and verbal communication skills and demonstrated personal integrity. Minimum three to five years work experience in intercollegiate athletics or a related field with experience in fund raising preferred. Demonstrated competence in program development and administration, staff training and supervision, decision-making, budget management and ability to work effectively in a team relationship. Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Beginning date: July 1, 2001.

  Send letter of application, a resume, response to application questions, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of five professional references to: Patricia S. Helton, Vice President for Student Life, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4135; email <heltonp@emu.edu>. Applications received by Jan. 15, 2001, will be given full consideration. Application materials are available via the Internet at <www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/adm-dirofathletics.htm>. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to gender, age, race, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

- **Columbia Bible College** announces ***two faculty openings***. CBC is an accredited Bible college in Abbotsford, B.C., Canada, with a student body of over 500. It is an evangelical Anabaptist college co-sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in B.C. and the Mennonite Brethren Churches of B.C. The desired areas of expertise for these teaching positions are ***missions/evangelism, theology (biblical, historical) and Bible***. Qualifications include a minimum of a master's degree with a major in one of the above fields, theological education and knowledge of Anabaptist theology and history preferred, agreement with Columbia's mission and confessional statements, a willingness to be a member of sponsoring conference church, experience in ministry, with teaching experience preferred.

  For a copy of the job description or other documents, please contact Dr. Ron Penner, Columbia Bible College, 2940 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8; 604-853-3567 ext. 316; fax 604-853-3063; email <ron.penner@columbiabc.edu>; web site <www.columbiabc.edu>.

  Please forward resume to the attention of Dr. Ron Penner by Feb. 15, 2001, although we will accept resumes until positions are filled. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed in the first instance to Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Starting date summer 2001.

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The big power of little things

by Joe Blowers

Sometimes it takes only a little thing to completely change a system. Given the right conditions, the flutter of a butterfly wing can trigger a chain of cause-and-effect that spawns a typhoon half the world away.

A couple of years ago, I came face-to-face with this phenomenon. I was cutting blackberries from around some young trees my students had planted. The day was clear and calm, but moisture from an uncommon summer shower still clung to the leaves. At one point I thought I detected a faint creaking coming from some large maple trees, but it quickly faded.

Twenty minutes later, though, the noise returned, loud and ominous, like someone tearing a great curtain. An ancient maple tilted, gaining momentum.

Decrepit roots tore free, popping like automatic weapon fire, as I moved quickly out of range. Like dominoes, one collapsing trunk felled another. A giant branch collapsed into a broken tangle where I had been standing. Heart pounding, I thanked God for sensitive hearing.

The tree stood through 100 years of punishing wind and ice storms. Why suddenly crash to earth on a calm July morning?

The simple answer is that it was rotten, weakened by fungus and carpenter ants. But its collapse came only when the minuscule weight of tiny water droplets, multiplied by thousands of leaves, finally tipped the scales for the old tree, the proverbial last straw.

Human civilization is a lot like that. Our lives give an illusion of permanence but are in reality supported by the thinnest of threads. We spend our days oblivious to how tenuous life really is.

And we're pushing closer to the edge. The natural bounty on which we depend is increasingly threatened by the daily choices we each make. It could be your choice (or mine) that tomorrow, like raindrops on maple leaves, tilts another life-supporting system into disarray.

As the 21st century begins, humanity charges ahead with the two biggest experiments ever imposed on Planet Earth. Our first experiment is the rapid extinction of much of creation, with the potential to lose as many as 25 percent of all species in the next 50 years.

And, incredibly, like mad scientists not content to run just one out-of-control experiment at a time, we are simultaneously tampering with the very fabric of global climate. Most experts agree this will lead to potentially devastating changes in weather patterns.

It's difficult to fathom the results of these two experiments now, but it should become abundantly clear to our grandchildren. Will they wonder what we possibly could have been thinking?

After all, it's possible your decision to buy that new SUV will be the event that tips the balance toward rapid global warming. Or my purchase of grapes shipped all the way from Chile may be the straw that breaks the climate's back.

The final nail in the coffin of sockeye salmon could come the night I carelessly leave my unused computer turned on. The toxic pesticides you use on your lawn may be the death knell for the spotted frog.

And, ironically, the net effect of all the unneeded gifts purchased this Christmas by all the world's Christians continues to disrupt God's carefully crafted balance of nature. Such is the power of little things.

But the power can work both ways. What if each of the world's 1 million Mennonites committed themselves to using environmentally friendly transportation? What if we all agreed to find creation-sustaining ways to grow our food? What if those of us who are rich determined to cut our consumption by 20 percent?

What if each of the world's 1 million Mennonites committed themselves to using environmentally friendly transportation? What if we all agreed to find creation-sustaining ways to grow our food? What if those of us who are rich determined to cut our consumption by 20 percent?

Imagine the clean air. Imagine the money for missions. Imagine each small action multiplied times 1 million Christians.

It may be enough to stop the tree from toppling. It may even be enough to strengthen weakened roots, to keep the tree of creation healthy and vibrant for tomorrow's children. Never underestimate the power of little things.

Joe Blowers is a science teacher in Portland, Ore. This is reprinted with permission from Mennonite Weekly Review.

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Everett J. Thomas

A new year for a new church (1)

Prayers

One of the spiritual disciplines taught in our seminaries is the "examen of consciousness." This ancient Christian practice is a prayer in four parts that allows the individual to prepare for the new by first reviewing the past.

In the examen process, the first prayer invites God's Spirit to illuminate our reflections so that we may see our experiences from God's point of view. The second prayer looks back over the past day to consider the gifts that God has given to us. The third prayer is one of confession: It lets the Spirit call our attention to any brokenness and sin that needs to be confessed, asks for cleansing and receives forgiveness. The fourth prayer looks ahead to the new day and petitions God to supply our needs and guide us into faithfulness.

Usually practiced by individuals wishing to prepare for a new day, such an examen can also be fruitful for a church that hopes to begin a "new day" by forming a new denomination in the year 2001. We can prepare for this watershed year by examining our corporate consciousness about the past year.

Illumination: The first prayer may be the least familiar. It invites God's Spirit to help us see the reality of what we have just experienced from God's point of view. The past year brought difficult and sometimes painful conversations about membership criteria for the new denomination. In some parts of the church the primary debate was about the role of women in leadership. And many leaders were caught up in exciting conversations about missions. The first prayer of the examen, then, invites us to imagine these most recent experiences from God's point of view.

The prayers end with trust that God will supply our needs and guide us into faithfulness as we become a new church in this new year.

Recounting the gifts: The second prayer may be more familiar but is easily ignored. Rather than look back over the year and think of the gifts God has given us, we tend to think of the problems we sorted through. But there have been gifts. For example, we are beginning to understand that separation into Canadian and U.S. country structures will provide strength for new partnership relationships. A fund-raising philosophy has emerged which invites every level of church to pass along the first-fruits of its income—all the way to Mennonite World Conference. And after a few stumbles at the beginning of the integration process, we now have focused leadership that is moving us confidently toward transformation. These are but a few of the gifts God has given us.

Confession: If the first prayer is unfamiliar and the second prayer easy to ignore, then the third prayer is the most difficult. How does a denomination allow God's Spirit to call its attention to any brokenness and sin, ask for cleansing and receive forgiveness? Certainly there is brokenness in our midst from the membership battle. How do we as a national church receive cleansing? How do we experience forgiveness? Perhaps such a process can begin in prayerfully planned worship services at Nashville, Tenn., in July.

Blessing and correction: Only after the first three prayers do we look ahead to the new era that is before us as a denomination. In this final prayer we hold the events of our new day before God and ask for both blessing and correction so that we may be guided into faithfulness. It is easy to ask for God's blessing. It is less common, however, to invite correction and remain in a posture of receptivity to it.

Gilberto Flores (see page 6) provides some correctives for our consideration. If we are serious about forming a global church, Flores says, then those of us in the North will need to change our attitudes and prejudices about the church in the South. Flores' words are hard, but we need to hear them as we form a new denomination.

The examen of consciousness does not happen accidentally for individuals or for a denomination. The discipline begins by allowing God's Spirit to illuminate our past so that we may see ourselves from God's point of view. The prayers end with trust that God will supply our needs and guide us into faithfulness as we become a new church in this new year.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

January 16, 2001

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dream of peace

page 4

6 Victory over the powers of death and evil
8 Visit underscores mission relationship
10 Missions, motivation and money
16 Future begins at Nashville

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Brother David

Thank you for the thoughtful tribute to bishop David Thomas, and thanks also to Jewel Showalter for her sensitive portrayal ("A Missions-Minded Leader," Dec. 26, 2000). I knew Thomas as Lancaster Conference moderator, as an interim bishop in our district, as an evangelist and, more recently, as a retired bishop still serving faithfully on the bishop board. I valued his clarity of insight, his commitment to unity in the church, his wonderful storytelling ability, his gentle humor and his gracious demeanor.

I am grateful that I was able to express personally—though inadequately—my appreciation to him for being such a wonderfully warm and Christ-possessed leader and model. I thank God for brother David.—*Paul W. Nisly, Grantham, Pa.*

Violent acts

In "Partisan Religion" (Wider World, Dec. 26, 2000), Rich Preheim tells about an incident where a priest put a letter condemning abortion under the windshield wipers of a parishioner who had Democratic bumper stickers on her car. The parishioner, who describes herself as pro-life, was offended. But why would a pro-life person support the Democratic Party, which is pro-abortion? That's kind of like someone with Nazi or Ku Klux Klan bumper stickers on her car calling herself anti-racist.

I wonder why Preheim seems to oppose the priest's actions. Our confession of faith says abortion, like war and capital punishment, is a violent act that is against the will of God, which is similar to the Catholic position. The priest insists that violent acts that are against the will of God must never be supported by Christians. What's wrong with that?—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

What did it say?

The Dec. 26, 2000, issue reported that a reprimand letter was sent to Loris Habegger for conducting a covenant ceremony for two people involved in homosexual lifestyle ("Minister Reprimanded for Same-Sex Ceremony"). How was the letter worded? If it was purely a personal letter, we do not need to know of its existence. If it was an official letter truly upholding Bible morality and the explicit statements of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, I would like to know what terms were used to describe the ceremony and what warning was issued.—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Morality and foolish mortals

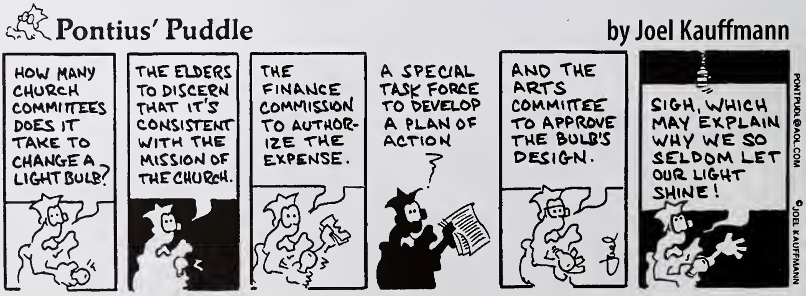
Over the last number of years we have become unaware of an extreme decline of morality in our country. We are paying a terrible price in the high rate of divorce and legalized murder in the guise of partial-birth abortions. Family values and Christianity are ridiculed and, in some cases, persecuted. I recently saw a high school play that implied that only a nerd would have a Bible in the house.

In his book *Peace With God*, Billy Graham writes: "As the Constitution is the highest law of the land, so the Bible is the highest law of God. For it is in the Bible that God sets forth his spiritual laws. It is in the Bible that God makes his enduring promises. It is in the Bible that God reveals the plan of redemption for the human race."

Now I realize that not all of our forefathers were God-fearing people, but I think a large number of our founding fathers were. At one time the United States was considered a Christian nation. Today that would be a misnomer. When I think of all the hospitals and institutions of learning that were founded by God-

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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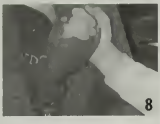
Vol. 4, No. 2, January 16, 2001



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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
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readers say

fearing people, I think we must be very foolish to deny what an influence our godly heritage has been on the success of our way of life.

I know that no political group will likely be responsible to turn the hearts of the people of this country back to God. That will only happen when individuals turn to God and seek his blessing. However, I think you would recognize that the influence of our leaders does have an impact on our society. We should pray for our leaders. Perhaps this is a last chance for this country to escape God's wrath and judgment. 2 Chronicles 7:14 says, "If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land."

I believe Shakespeare said it well when he said, "What fools these mortals be."—*Paul V. Springer, Fisher, Ill.*

New Bible?

I am embarrassed to belong to a one-sin church known as the transformed Mennonite Church USA. It appears that in the membership guidelines there is only one sin, homosexuality, that merits attention and for which ministers might lose their credentials. Is it really true that transformation is such a wonderful thing that it obliterates all the other sins noted in the Bible, both personal and social? I guess we don't have to worry about greed, idolatry, lying, pride, adultery and all the other sins mentioned in the Bible.

Where in the Bible does it say that homosexuality is the worst of all sins and the only one that we have to be concerned with? Where does it say that churches that open their doors to sinners should be excommunicated if they allow homosexuals to join? Is there a new Bible that lists this sin above all other sins? If so, then I would like to purchase one of those new Bibles.—*Harley J. Stucky, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt

Dream of peace

by Eve MacMaster

A reflection on Isaiah 11:1-9 and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech

I was in Washington on Aug. 28, 1963, when Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous "I have a dream" speech, and the city was afraid. There had never been an event like that Freedom March, never so many people coming to the Mall at one time.

You could feel the fear among official Washington—fear of the marchers, fear of crowds getting out of hand. I watched as helicopters droned across the summer sky, their great whirring blades like some giant insect. Soldiers were on alert all around the city, brought in from bases nearby.

You could feel the fear in the nation, too—fear of trouble, of change. Many white people were saying, "What do those Negroes want?"

I was a Peace Corps volunteer, in training that summer at Georgetown University. Our group was forbidden to carry signs to the Freedom March. The word came down from headquarters that they did not want to be identified with the march in any way.

Politicians in Congress and the White House were afraid.

Some of us were angry at injustice, at the disrespect and insults our friends were enduring.

Some of us were at a restaurant in Maryland with my friend Pat, a beautiful young woman from South Carolina, tall and dignified, with lovely brown skin. That restaurant refused to seat Pat, and the whole group walked out, singing "We shall overcome … someday."

In Atlanta, where my husband and I recently visited our son Tom and his wife, we were often in places where blacks and whites were together, even at lunch counters in country restaurants.

We have a long way to go, but some things have changed for the better. The dream of Martin Luther King Jr. that rang out in the summer sunshine in 1963 set out a vision that moved many white people toward repentance and the nation toward justice. The Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, eliminating legal segregation.

You can't get to peace without going through justice, and that's hard, very hard, but not impossible when you have a dream.

The prophet Isaiah had a dream of peace. Isaiah called for justice and spoke words of hope to discouraged and frightened people. In his time, the northern kingdom of Israel had fallen to the Assyrians, and the leaders of the southern kingdom of Judah were ignoring the needs of the poor. Judah was reduced to a few villages around Jerusalem, and the royal house of David was a failure, a disgrace, an embarrassment, ignorant of the ways of the Lord. The rulers of Judah had fallen far from the glory days of their ancestors David and Solomon.

Into this situation came the prophet Isaiah, speaking God's words, sharing a vision of a world at peace. Isaiah painted a word picture of a new creation, a new reality with such a transformation of power that the world became young again, and all creatures lived as they did in the Garden of Eden, at peace.

In such a world the strong and the swift do not hunt and kill the slow and the weak. Snakes don't bite, and predators don't eat the flesh of their prey. Wolves live quietly with lambs. Leopards lie down with baby goats. Calves and lions sit quietly side by side.

In such a world, cows and bears, calves and baby bear cubs, lie down together. The lion doesn't sink its great teeth into the skin of the calf but eats hay with the ox, and a trusting little baby reaches his dimpled hand into the snake's den.

In such a world no one is afraid, and "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Isaiah dreamed of a world in which all creatures are safe, the strong treat the weak kindly and everyone knows the Lord. But it sounds like a fairy tale, a fantasy, for our world is not a safe place.

In our world, while the strong eat the food, the weak rise up hungry. While the rich shop for luxuries, the homeless poor line up at soup kitchens.

Our homes and neighborhoods are familiar with violence. Money and power rule. The wealth of our nation is spent on weapons of mass destruction instead of schools for mass instruction, and everyone is afraid.

My father used to tell about a traveler who drove into another state and became lost. He stopped at a farmhouse and asked directions of an old man sitting on the porch.

"Well," said the old man, when he learned where the traveler wanted to go, "you just keep on going down this road, and at the next crossroads you turn left and … no, that won't do it."

He scratched his head, then said, "Turn around and go back a mile or so until you pass the gas station. At the next road you turn right and … no, that won't do." He seemed lost in thought, then said slowly, "Young man, you can't get there from here."

We can't get to peace from here. We have the wrong kind of vision. Our visions glorify violence and greed. Advertisements on television invite us to purchase toy machine guns and video war games, so our children can kill people for entertainment. Our movies are full of brutality. Our culture is saturated with violence. We need to start from somewhere else.

We can't get to peace without repentance, without changing our way of living, without defanging the snakes and declawing the wolves, without changing the lion's menu from veal to straw. We can't get to peace without a vision of a new reality.

Before Isaiah describes the peaceable kingdom, he tells how the Spirit of the Lord brings new life to the house of David. An unexpected green growth sprouts from an old stump. New life springs up in the midst of despair and hopelessness. The stump of Jesse is not dead, says Isaiah, for God's purpose is new life.

And this descendant of the royal house "will judge the poor with righteousness, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth." He will be a righteous king, fulfilling God's intention that the poor be treated fairly, for justice is the character of God.

Earlier Isaiah had declared (5:16), "The Lord of Hosts is exalted by justice." Justice is at the heart of God. Therefore, before the peaceable kingdom, says Isaiah, comes the righteous king who establishes justice.

The good news of the gospel is that the righteous king has come, and his name is Jesus Christ. The good news is that through Christ God is making Isaiah's dream a reality. That is our hope, whatever world of experience we are living through.

Our hope is not based on human optimism but on our trustworthy God, whose character is righteousness, whose purpose is peace. The strong Spirit of God is working to bring forth new life in our suffering and dying world. How? Through God's people, exalting the Lord as he would be exalted, by justice.

Imagine a world in which the Lord is so exalted by people that their passion for justice replaces their lust for consumer goods, and every child has a house to live in, food to eat, a school to learn in and medicine when sick.

Envision a world in which we solve conflicts with words, not bullets, everyone is treated with respect, and our homes and communities are safe places for all people.

Dream of a world in which our tax dollars pay for airplanes and ships to carry materials and workers to build houses and bridges and schools and roads for people in poor countries; a world in which the gigantic planes and ships that were sent for war in the Persian Gulf are used instead for relief in Honduras and Nicaragua; a world in which our tax dollars do not pay for missiles to carry bombs to destroy the houses and bridges and schools and roads of people in nations our government calls enemies.

Let us not only dream but be, through Christ, people who exalt the Lord by doing justice. Let us join Isaiah and dare to say, like Martin Luther King Jr., "I have a dream."

The Bible begins and ends with a picture of our true home. At the beginning of the story, in Genesis, we find the Garden of Eden, where man, woman and animals live together in peace, and God walks in the garden in the cool of the evening. At the end of the story, in Revelation, God prepares a city where God dwells with mortals, wiping "every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more" (Revelation 21:4). For when God is with his people, dreams of peace do come true.

We can't get to peace without repentance, without changing our way of living. We can't get to peace without a vision of a new reality.

Eve MacMaster is to become pastor next month at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Gainesville, Fla.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea.—Isaiah 11:1-9 NRSV

difficult
texts of
the Bible

The one sitting on the horse was named Faithful and True. … The armies of heaven … followed him on white horses.
—Revelation 19:11,14 NLT

Victory over the powers of death and evil

Ninth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Ted Grimsrud

Is the Book of Revelation a constructive resource for Christian peacemakers, or is it one of those parts of the Bible we must either ignore or explain away, since its message apparently stands in tension with our pacifist convictions? When we ignore Revelation, we miss out on powerful words of encouragement for faith—even encouragement for holding fast to our peace convictions.

The crucial moment in interpreting Revelation may well come before we even begin reading the book. What are we looking for when we look at this final book of the Bible? Are we looking for predictions of the future, or are we looking for ethical and spiritual guidance for the present? How we understand what we go on to read will likely be shaped about how we answer this question.

We should approach Revelation similarly to how we approach other books of the Bible. We start by asking what its message would have meant to the one who wrote it and those who first read it or heard it read. Then we look for parallels between the original setting and ours and for relevance the original message may have for us.

The reality of the victory of the Lamb speaks to those tempted with conformity by challenging them to hold fast to the way of Jesus and resist temptation from other notions of human fulfillment. This reality also comforts those facing persecution.

Revelation was written in the late first century, approximately 60 years after Jesus' crucifixion. The author, a pastor named John, wrote the book to offer encouragement to Christians facing a pair of challenges. The messages to seven different churches that make up chapters 2 and 3 of the book provide our main evidence for the author's central concerns. The first readers of Revelation faced challenges either (1) to place too high a priority on conformity with their culture (see the message to the church in Laodicea) or (2) to face harsh persecution from that culture (see the messages to the churches at Philadelphia and Sardis).

John's basic message in response to both these challenges is to present Jesus of Nazareth (often using the symbol of the Lamb) as the definitive expression of God in human history. Jesus has already won the victory of the ages over the powers of evil with his life, death and resurrection. Revelation 5 shows the Lamb being given the scroll that tells the outcome of history, and then being worshiped by all creatures as the victor.

The reality of the victory of the Lamb speaks to those tempted with conformity by challenging them to hold fast to the way of Jesus and resist temptation from other notions of human fulfillment. This reality also comforts those facing persecution: Hold fast, you are following the steps of the Lamb, and with the Lamb you will be victors over the powers of death and evil.

After this vision of the victorious Lamb in chapter 5, John tells of a series of visions in chapters 6-18. These visions portray a great deal of upheaval, turmoil, even destruction. Ultimately, however, they reflect John's deep-seated conviction that the God of the Lamb is not defeated by the powers of sin, death and evil. God is in fact moving history toward the full consummation of the victory of the Lamb—and the healing of the nations, the human enemies of God (to be portrayed in chapters 21 and 22).

The final vision in these series of plagues, in chapter 18, tells of the fall of the human city ("Babylon"), which has stood in arrogant rebellion against God. After Babylon falls, beginning in chapter 19, we see the beginnings of a great celebration—the wedding of the Lamb (19:7).

The scene switches in 19:11 to what at first glance seems a vision of a coming battle. Jesus comes onto the scene as God's warrior-judge. But the war is over, for all intents and purposes, due to Jesus' victory on the cross. What we actually see in what follows is not a battle but simply the carrying out of God's judgment. The beast and false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire.

Jesus, dressed in a robe stained with his own blood, is pictured here as the true ruler. He is so powerful that he simply throws his enemies into the lake of fire—without resistance on their part.

The white horse Jesus rides (19:11) symbolizes victory. He comes as the one who has conquered sin, death and evil through his death and resurrection. As the following verses make clear, he comes to this apparent battle with the forces of evil already the victor. The battle was foreseen in 16:13-14 ("three foul spirits like frogs … go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty"). The outcome of this battle in no way is in question.

The rider is called "faithful and true," that is, "the faithful and true witness" of 1:5 and 3:14. He is the one who remained faithful and true to God even when it meant a martyr's death. That is how he gained the white horse. He wins the "war" by remaining faithful to the way of the cross in the face of temptations to follow other ways.

Revelation 19:13 contains a key image. The rider approaches this battle "clothed in a robe dipped in blood." The blood has already been shed before the battle begins; Jesus' death on the cross is the reason no actual battle takes place here. Jesus can already ride the white horse because the actual battle is over. He won the battle on the basis of his faithfulness unto death.

In 19:11-20, John presents a rebirth of images. He uses battle imagery to present a picture of Jesus winning the ultimate battle in the conflict between good and evil. Jesus does this not through a bloodbath in the future but rather in the past historical event of his death and resurrection.

The powers of evil have been defeated already—through the Lamb's suffering love. Revelation 14:6 speaks of the relevance of this suffering love for our hope and our discipleship. Those who sing a "new song" are those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Ted Grimsrud teaches theology and peace studies at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Jesus' death on the cross is the reason no actual battle takes place here. Jesus can already ride the white horse because the actual battle is over. He won the battle on the basis of his faithfulness unto death.

St. John the Evangelist on Patmos by Titian, from the Samuel H. Kress Collection in the National Gallery of Art, Washington

Ex-COM/AIMM worker, Botswana church leader underscore distinctive mission relationship

NEWTON, Kan.—One was born in Europe, the other in Africa. But there have been connections between Mennonites and African Independent Churches since Mennonites began working among AICs in Botswana some 25 years ago.

"The Mennonites were the first missionaries to recognize the African Independent Churches as churches of Christ," says Otsile Ditsheko, a leader in an AIC denomination called the Eleven Apostles Church.

But the relationship between the two groups is not the usual missionary story. "Mennonites in southern Africa have agreed to forego the usual objective of mission work: to plant [their own denomination's] churches," says Jonathan Larson, a mission worker in Botswana from 1981 to 1994, serving with the Commission on Overseas Mission under the auspices of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. "That strategic decision made early on was key; the relationship would have dried up quickly if there had been church planting."

Instead, Mennonite mission work in Botswana has been providing theological and other kinds of education for AIC leaders.

Ditsheko and Larson renewed their personal relationship when Ditsheko visited the United States to attend the graduation of a nephew from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., last month. Ditsheko and Larson, who is now pastor of Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta, spent several weeks touring U.S. Mennonite communities.

Ditsheko and Larson began working together in 1984, holding training courses for AIC pastors and other leaders. "We had classes or discussions on everything from church constitutions to animal sacrifice," Larson says. "These were things not covered in a North American seminary curriculum."

Ditsheko and Larson traveled together not only across Botswana but also to Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland. "We were in the classroom together, visited leaders together, mediated conflicts together," Larson says.

Adds Ditsheko, "There was hardly any part of our lives that we didn't share together."

The two men have an even deeper connection. At Easter 1986, Larson presided at Ditsheko's ordination to the ministry. Eight years later, as Larson and his family were concluding their term in Botswana, the AIC leaders he worked with told Larson that he could not leave before they had ordained him.

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Otsile Ditsheko and Jonathan Larson

"I had been commissioned for service in Botswana [in 1981] but not ordained," Larson says. "I was completely surprised and completely delighted."

"If Jonathan was not ordained from North America," says Ditsheko, who presided over the service, "then it was a privilege for us to do it from Botswana. The bishops unanimously agreed it was important for us to do. We were so excited to participate in this."

The ordination service included a number of choirs, a traditional hand-washing ritual, a standing-room-only crowd and the laying on of hands by bishops in colorful robes. It is probably safe to say, notes Larson, that no other Mennonite pastor in North America had an ordination service quite like this one.

"The AICs said to the Mennonites [in the beginning], 'Help us with your gift of understanding the Bible,' " Larson says. "[With my ordination], they said, 'Now we want to give you [North American Mennonites] this gift of healing.'

"There is a long history in the African Independent Churches of prayer with and for those who are sick, depressed, broken in a variety of ways. ... We Mennonites live not only with individual brokenness but also with broken institutions—the 'divided house.' This is the 'barefoot church' reaching out to us to say we ought not to despair."

Larson also says there is a "beautiful symmetry" to Ditsheko's trip. "We're accustomed in Africa to having Mennonite administrators come to visit," he says. "The African Independent Churches have sent someone to take a look at the North American Mennonite community."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and AIMM news services*

AICs called Africa's 'real Anabaptists'

With 13 years experience in Botswana with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, Jonathan Larson has observed similarities between Mennonites and the African Independent Churches (AIC).

"[AIC] is a movement that has come through suffering [as a result of persecution]," says Larson, now pastor of Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta. "Because of that, they hold to some basic nonviolent beliefs. Also, AICs only baptize adults."

Quoting British missiologist Andrew Walls, Larson says the AICs "are the real Anabaptists of Africa." Larson also says he has heard AIC people call Mennonites "the African Independent Churches across the water."

The next Mennonite World Conference assembly is scheduled for 2003 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. "AIC people will clamber onto buses, trucks, whatever conveyance they can find, and come to Zimbabwe to meet their kin," Larson says. "And I wonder how they will be welcomed."—*GCMC and AIMM news services*

Colleges adopt new tuition match plan

Plan fosters cooperation, cuts confusion and competition

In yet another act of collaboration, the colleges of the emerging Mennonite Church USA have put their money where their mouths are. According to a uniform-match plan approved by the presidents, the five colleges will each offer the same match to tuition assistance offered by congregations to their students.

Each Mennonite Church USA college will match dollar for dollar the first $1,000 provided by a congregation to a student attending that college. Beyond $1,000, the college will provide $1 for every $4 of congregational assistance. For example, if a congregation gives $2,000 toward a student's tuition, the college will provide $1,250.

Previously, each school had different match policies. Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., Goshen (Ind.) College and Hesston (Kan.) College each offered dollar-for-dollar matches up to $500. Bluffton (Ohio) College provided dollar-for-dollar matches up to $2,000. Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., gave $1 for every $4 of congregational assistance with no limit.

The uniform-match plan will begin with all new students this fall and will be completely phased in over four years.

"We believe a uniform-match plan is desirable to express the unity of Mennonite colleges and to improve clarity for the churches involved," says Rich Gerig, Goshen's associate vice president for institutional advancement and chair of the Gideon Education Projects Committee, which drafted the plan. GEPC is a General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church committee coordinating joint projects among the colleges.

Lawrence Matthews, Bluffton director of financial aid, says the plan "will help take the confusion out of the process for people administering the program at the congregational level."

Under the plan, colleges will match assistance provided by a local congregation, a group of congregations providing aid to students from every congregation in the group, a smaller congregation that has been adopted by a larger one with more financial resources, or an area conference. If more than one of these contributes to a student's tuition, the college will consider the total as one contribution; the college will not match each amount separately.

"We can demonstrate statistically that those students who are supported financially by their home churches are more likely to persist in their education while remaining connected and accountable to their home congregation," Matthews says, "and these same students are more likely to continue in their post-college lives to be involved in the church."

The uniform-match plan is the latest transformation development for the colleges. The proposal for a new education agency was one of the first to be approved by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board last year.

MCC photo by Linda Shelly

Pump up the water

A resident of the Nicaraguan village of Patastule uses a bicycle pump to bring water from a nearby river to the village. Residents have been trying for years to increase water supplies but with limited success. The idea for the bicycle pump was introduced by Mennonite Central Committee worker Susan Classen. Villagers are now considering ways to use the river water for irrigation. Most of the 40 families of Patastule are members of a local Mennonite congregation.

Pastor still waiting to return to U.S.

Like many congregations, Koinonia Mennonite Church in Chandler, Ariz., has been without a pastor for much of the year.

It's not that the congregation doesn't have a pastor. It does. But he has been prohibited from returning to this country.

John Lawrence, a native of South Africa, began as Koinonia's pastor in 1997. Last spring he returned to South Africa for what was expected to be a short visit to complete the process of obtaining permanent residency in the United States. But his application was denied, leaving both Lawrence and Koinonia in limbo.

Koinonia has been using supply pastors during the interim. The Lawrence family has been able to spend time with his wife's ailing father and participate in an emerging Anabaptist congregation in Cape Town.

But there is hope for Lawrence's return as his son recently married a U.S. citizen, making him eligible to sponsor his parents in the United States.—*Panorama*

Missions, motivation and money

Not business as usual for Indiana cabinetmaker

BRISTOL, Ind.—When Kevin Beck started his own business in 1998, he threw out the typical business plan that focused on making as much money as possible. Instead, with the encouragement of his wife, Pat, he made creating an income stream for missions a primary goal of his business. With an improbable product—wooden cabinet covers for old hot-water radiators—and an idealist's vision, he set out by faith to change the world, one cabinet at a time.

Now more than two years later, Beck has no regrets about the decision. His Bristol-based business, aptly named Mission Woodworking, has doubled in size each year and has a five-month supply of back orders on cabinets. Beck thinks he knows why. Within a month after opening, he says, "God opened the floodgates of sales, and we saw sales volume like we had never seen before, and it has never let up."

Beck has no neat formula for determining the amount the business will contribute to missions. He looks at what he needs to cover expenses and pay off his debt, and then each year, with his employees, Beck calculates what the company can pledge to the agencies they want to support. "When the start-up debt is paid off, we perceive God turning us loose in a bigger way," he says.

Mission Woodworking has supported ministries such as Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Youth With a Mission as well as local efforts.

Beck discovered that his goal of generating funds for missions motivated his workers, too. When the business began, it produced five to 15 cabinets a week. By August 2000, it was producing 135 cabinets a week. Mission Woodworking employs seven workers in the shop and five on the road making deliveries.

"When we give money to Mennonite Board of Missions, it's not a charitable gift," Beck says. "For us, it's an investment. Not an investment in the standard terms. ... For me, it's an investment in my employees. We earn that money back in the next six weeks because there's a motivational effect that comes out of it. There's a synergy that comes as a result of the gift."

When business goals match personal Christian goals, such as supporting missions, people are motivated, Beck says. "What has been so effective for us is to take those same values and incorporate them into the business culture," he says. "And when those two match, that motivates workers. They'll stay over. They'll volunteer to come in on Saturday."

If we could gather a group of people around us and set up a business that works to give money away, collectively we could all do far more than each one of us could individually.

—Kevin Beck

MBM photo by John D. Yoder

Kevin Beck (front left) and employees of Mission Woodworking pose around their product, a cabinet to cover old hot-water radiators.

The decision to support missions through a business came at an opportune time. Beck's congregation, Communion Fellowship in Goshen, was beginning a partnership with MBM to support several of its members as missionaries in Senegal. Yet the idea of creating a business with a mission focus took considerable thought and prayer.

"If we had continued to work for a wage, we could give 10 percent away," Beck says. "But if we could gather a group of people around us and set up a business that works to give money away, collectively we could all do far more than each one of us could individually."

In practice, that gathering also takes the form of involving the employees in the giving. They are also passionate about missions and know how much the company gives. Sometimes they present the check, too, as Aaron Fleming did recently to MBM president Stanley Green.

"I clearly felt God saying that employees are to be a part of the gifting," Beck says. "They are the ones who also need to get that reward. It's not just to be the front office mailing that check in private."

At staff meetings every Monday morning, employees are also involved in a time of prayer for those they support. "We pray for safety, efficiency, employees and our families," Beck says. "We thank God every week for what he's given us and that we may steward it wisely.

"Our American culture says when you come into a bunch of money, buy the bigger house, buy the bigger car, increase your cost of living. Our commitment is that our standard of living will not change."*—John D. Yoder of MBM News Service*

Problems continue for MCC Thailand worker

AKRON, Pa.—First Max Ediger faced charges of harboring illegal immigrants. Now the Mennonite Central Committee worker has been prohibited from returning to his MCC assignment in Thailand.

Following a December 2000 visit to the United States, Ediger was denied entry into Thailand on Dec. 31. Thai immigration officials told him that his name had been placed on a Ministry of Interior list in November barring him from entering the country. Ediger has served in Thailand with MCC since 1978.

Ediger is now in Hong Kong working with the Christian Council of Asia and exploring future options. Immigration officials say it may be possible to appeal the ban on his entry into Thailand.

It is unclear whether the ban is connected with Ediger's court case last year on charges of harboring illegal immigrants. He was arrested in February after a Burmese rebel killed in a skirmish in Thailand was discovered to have literature from Burma Issues, the human-rights organization for which Ediger works. In September he pleaded guilty and received a suspended sentence.—*MCC News Service*

EMM falls short of budget despite record income

SALUNGA, Pa.—Despite record giving last year, Eastern Mennonite Missions' income fell nearly $200,000 short of expenses in 2000. EMM received $6.8 million and spent about $7 million.

But the numbers aren't as bad as they may seem, says EMM finance director Millard Garrett. All but $45,000 of the shortfall came from designated funds donated in prior years but spent in 2000 for continuing relief projects.

EMM closed its fiscal year on Dec. 30.

"We are deeply grateful for the strong support of individuals and churches as we move into the 21st century," says EMM president Richard Showalter. "As giving continues strong, we hope to be able to send more teams and to share more with overseas partner missions and churches than we have this year."—*EMM News Service*

EMU play chosen for theater competition

HARRISONBURG, Va.—An original Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) play based on the experiences of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker in the Balkans has been selected for a major theater competition.

Torba, which premiered last fall on the EMU campus in Harrisonburg, was one of six plays accepted for the southeastern region Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, to be held Feb. 6-11 at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. *Torba* is the first EMU performance to be selected for the competition.

The play, written and directed by EMU theater professor Ingrid De Sanctis, chronicles the experiences of MCC worker Amy Gopp during her four years of work with refugees in the former Yugoslavia.

Work continues on school dormitory in Ghana

ACCRA, Ghana—The women who will be the first residents of the Erma Grove Memorial Hostel never met the building's namesake, but they do know some of her family. Two nephews of the late Mennonite Board of Missions worker were part of an MBM work team to Ghana in November and December 2000.

The team of North Americans helped start construction on the hostel, which will be a women's dormitory for Good News Theological College and Seminary near Accra. Grove, who served in Ghana from 1957 to 1983, helped start the school and was its first director from 1971 to 1983. Grove died last year.

The dormitory could be ready for occupancy by March and will eventually be able to house 55 women. "We can now enroll as many women as apply," says professor Humphrey Akogyeram.—*MBM News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Jan. 16, 1886—Mennonites in the German capital city of Berlin meet in a hotel for their first worship service.

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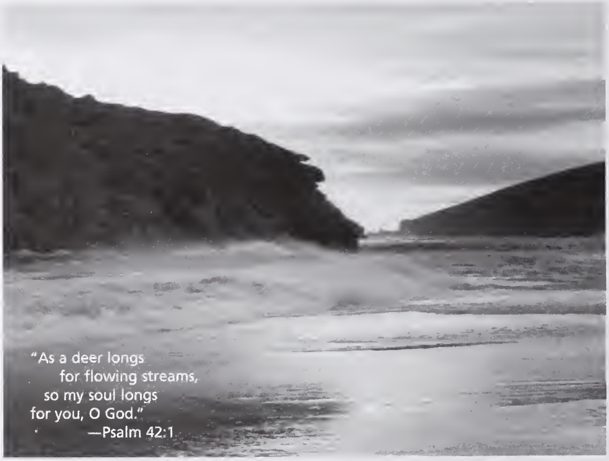

"As a deer longs
for flowing streams,
so my soul longs
for you, O God."
—Psalm 42:1

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Workers

Pitts, Katherine, is concluding a pastorate at Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church and will begin as pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., Jan. 28.

Rhodes, Cherie and Chris, Kalona, Iowa, have begun an Eastern Mennonite Missions assignment in La Ceiba, Honduras.

Births

Benson, Rylee Jo, Dec. 16, to Kelly (Crilow) and Travis Benson, Willmar, Minn.

Brandenberger, Janson Darnel, Dec. 30, to Elmer and Rhoda Brandenberger, Shipshewana, Ind.

Carranza, André James, Dec. 19, to Brenda (Derstine) and Merari Carranza, Hatfield, Pa.

Figaro, Urgele Cla, Nov. 25, to Calmie (Despagne) and Raguel Figaro, Hesston, Kan.

Lefever, Benjamin Allon, Dec. 17, to Lauri (Hoober) and Rodney Lefever, Lancaster, Pa.

Murphy, Parker James, Dec. 11, to Jamie and Jessica (Yoder) Murphy, Newton, Kan.

Yoder, Joel Graber, Dec. 21, to Starla Graber and Harley Yoder, Elkhart, Ind.

Marriages

Black/Lapp: Christopher Black, Goshen, Ind., and Elizabeth Lapp, West Liberty, Ohio, Dec. 16 at West Liberty.

Carmien/Gross: Dena Carmien, Dewey, Ill., and Max Gross, Dewey, Oct. 28 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Hill/Huebert: Parker Hill, Arlington, Va., and Monica Huebert, Arlington, Dec. 15 at Charleston, S.C.

Pennypacker/Swartzendruber: Angie Pennypacker, Normal, Ill., and Scott Swartzendruber, Minier, Ill., Dec. 16 at Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Beechy, Atlee, 86, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 31 of cancer. Spouse: Winifred Nelson Beechy. Parents: George and Katie Beechy (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Kreider, Judy, Susan Enz; six grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Birkey, Eleanor, 77, Champaign, Ill., died Nov. 13. Parents: Joseph and Ida Zehr Birkey (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 16 at Gibson City, Ill.

Cressman, Daniel, 94, Elmira, Ont., died Dec. 19. Spouse: Magdalena Martin Cressman (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Leah Cressman (deceased). Survivors: children Erma Dettwiler, Curtis, Mervin; nine grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Fast, Ethel Schindler, 101, North Newton, Kan., died Dec. 16. Spouse: Henry A. Fast (deceased). Parents: Paul and Lydia Trachsel Schindler (deceased). Survivors: children Marjorie Schowalter, Florence Siebert, Richard; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 19 at Newton, Kan.; memorial service: Jan. 7 at North Newton.

Fast, Henry L., 94, North Newton, Kan., died Dec. 17. Spouse: Anna Rempel Fast (deceased). Parents: John and Lena Schmidt Fast (deceased). Survivors: children Elisabeth Smith, Evelyn Schofield, Darrell, Donald; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 21 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Friesen, Harvey, 89, Henderson, Neb., died Dec. 17. Spouse: Martha Friesen. Parents: George and Margaretha Quiring Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Erwin, Ivan, Fern Hieb; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 20 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Kalbfleisch, Raymond, 88, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 14. Spouse: Mary Louise Kalbfleisch. Parents: Jacob and Joanna Kalbfleisch (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 16 at Goshen and at River Mennonite Church, Brutus, Mich.

Koehn, Eugene, 71, Halstead, Kan., died Dec. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Winifred Jantz Koehn. Parents: Ben and Ethel Koehn (deceased). Other survivors: children Cynthia Reimer, Cheryl Jones, Linda Imaizumi; six grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 23 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead.

Litwiller, Verena Martin, 93, Hopedale, Ill., died Dec. 28. Spouse: Ammon Litwiller (deceased). Parents: Chris and Lina Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Dale, Maxine Kauffmann, Marilyn Studer; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Mishler, Ida Schrock, 94, Shipshewana, Ind., died Dec. 15. Spouse: Clem Mishler (deceased). Parents: John and Grace Miller Schrock (deceased). Survivors: children Lester, Lloyd, Norma Burgess; 16 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 19 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Peachey, Helen Mumaw, 71, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 14 of cancer. Spouse: Laban Peachey. Other survivors: children Phyllis Friesen, Lowell, Byron, Joyce Peachey Lind; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Stoltzfus, Mayme Stoltzfus, 62, Kinzers, Pa., died Dec. 7 of injuries in an auto accident. Spouse: Mervin Stoltzfus. Parents: David (deceased) and Fannie Zook Stoltzfus. Other survivors: children Albert, Linford, Lawrence; six grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 10 at Bart Mennonite Church, Christiana, Pa.

Streid, Arthur, 86, Chenoa, Ill., died Dec. 24. Spouse: Bonnie Stapp Streid. Parents: Arthur and Minnie Sommer Streid (deceased). Other survivors: children Edwina Ocepeck, Arthur; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa.

Stutzman, Clifford, 93, Hesston, Kan., died Dec. 27 of cancer. Spouse: Lillian Stutzman (deceased). Parents: William and Fanny Birky Stutzman (deceased). Survivors: children Donnell, Douglas, Duane; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

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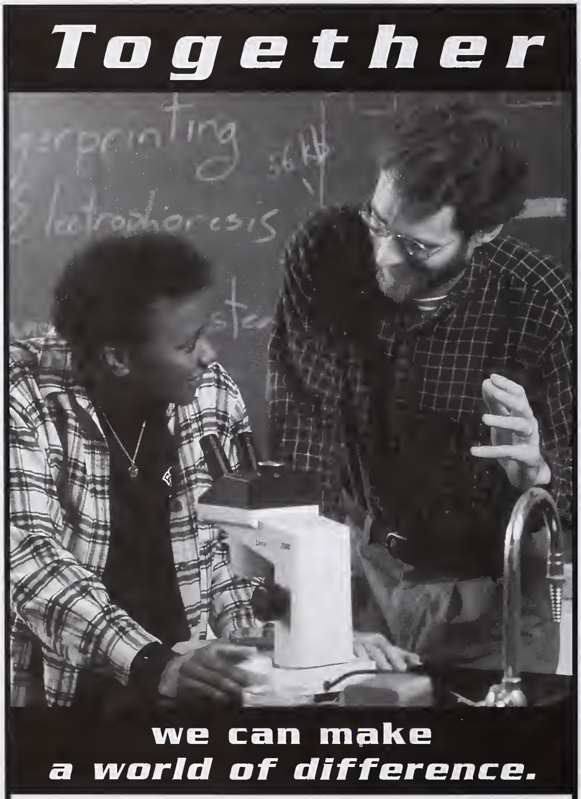
  Send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Beryl Brubaker, Academic Provost, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.



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  If you possess a college degree and at least 2 years of experience with people with mental retardation, please call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Wildwood Mennonite Church**, Saskatoon, 25 years old with an average attendance of 145, 75% under age 45, seeks ***pastoral leadership***. We express a strong Anabaptist tradition, embrace intergenerational worship and fellowship, and have a staffed youth program. This position could be filled by more than one person.

  Please send resumes to Brenda MacDonald, 1617 Sommerfeld Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7H 2S5; <bgjkw.macd@sk.sympatico.ca>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks the following positions:

  Media producer to lead EMM's media staff, functions and projects, beginning May 1. Experience with a wide range of communications media required.

  Writer/editor to write, proofread and edit print pieces and manage the web site, beginning around April 16.

  Contact Sherill at Eastern Mennonite Missions, 717-898-2251; email <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., seeks ***summer staff*** June 24-Aug. 17: counselors, assistant program director, cook, assistant cook, nurse, lifeguard, kitchen and maintenance workers.

  Information at 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email <bbc@valley.net>.

- **Opportunities for service! *Eastern Mennonite Missions*** has current opportunities as follows: medical personnel in rural Guatemala; teachers for a variety of settings for missionary children, in Christian schools and TESOL in countries like Albania, China, Thailand, Honduras, Vietnam and others; church planters in Albania.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks 3/4- to full-time, one-year ***vocal/choral faculty position*** for fall 2001. Master's degree required, doctorate preferred. Area of specialization: voice; area of competence: choral conducting. Experience with college-level students desirable. Evidence of teaching excellence and performance experience preferred. Responsibilities include private voice instruction, conducting University Chorale and Chamber Singers, possible teaching of church music courses and other music courses as needed, according to applicant's strengths. Must be familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Nine-month contract; salary and rank determined by education and experience.

  Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, transcripts (unofficial acceptable) and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>; web <http://www.emu.edu>. Review begins Feb. 1. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Canadian Mennonite University** seeks full-time faculty position for September 2001 in ***conflict transformation studies and international development studies***. CMU seeks candidates committed to excellence in teaching and research in interdisciplinary perspectives in both international development and conflict transformation. Candidates who are qualified in only one of these areas may also be considered. Ph.D. in related field and commitment to education in an Anabaptist-Mennonite context are required; field experience is desirable. CMU is a liberal arts university, formed in 1999 as an association of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College in Winnipeg. CMU is committed to being a center for careful reflection on the integration of faith and life. Through Menno Simons College, CMU offers undergraduate majors in international development studies and conflict resolution/transformation studies, both on its own campus and in association with the University of Winnipeg. Processing of applications will begin March 1, 2001.

  Submit applications to Dean E. Peachey, Academic Dean, Menno Simons College, 380 Spence St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9. For further information, email <dpeachey@cmu.ca> or see <www.cmu.ca>.

by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Make Hunger History! (Bread for the World, 50 F St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001, <www.bread.org>, $7, plus $3 for shipping) is a resource for Sunday school teachers that helps children in grades 4-6 understand the problem of hunger in the United States.

God's Healing Strategy: An Introduction to the Bible's Main Themes by Ted Grimsrud (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $13.95) provides a compelling and sweeping overview of the message of the Bible.

Anabaptist Theology in the Face of Postmodernity: A Proposal for the Third Millennium by J. Denny Weaver (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $22.95) shows that peace-oriented Anabaptist-Mennonite thought contains seeds of a theology that is biblical but poses an alternative to the theology of Christendom, which accommodates violence.

The Call to Love by Lora Riley (Tyndale, 2000, $10.99) uses biblical teaching and personal stories to show readers how to put their love into action.

Nobody's Child Anymore: Grieving, Caring and Comforting When Parents Die by Barbara Bartocci (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $11.95) leads readers through four stages most adults experience at some time: caring for a dying parent, mourning the loss, caring for the parent left behind and finding new meaning beyond grief.

Blessings: A Heartwarming Classic of Hope by Mary Craig (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $12.95) is an autobiographical sketch of life with a severely handicapped child.

What to Do When You Don't Know What to Say by Mary Ann Froehlich and PeggySue Wells (Bethany House, 2000, $7.99) tells stories and gives practical ideas for how to be a comforter.

Faith and Finances: Helping People Manage Their Money by Gary Nederveld with Erica Chung (CRC Publications, 2000, $29.95) helps churches and other organizations develop a financial literacy program.

How to Understand the Bible by David Ewert (Herald Press, 2000, $14.99) offers guidelines on studying the Scriptures. It explains literary forms, idioms and figures of speech from ancient cultures in order to understand their meanings for today.

Surprises of the Christian Way by David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 2000, $14.99) helps longtime Christians and seekers wondering why the gospel matters to be surprised anew by the fresh and amazing power of Christian faith to transform lives.

My Heart in My Mouth: Prayers for Our Lives by Ted Loder (Innisfree Press, 2000, $14.95) is a collection of prayers that will appeal especially to people committed to social justice and sensitive to inclusive language.

The Forever People: Living Today in the Light of Eternity by Joel Nederhood (CRC Publications, 2000, $11.95) addresses the question, How does knowing we will live forever affect how we live today?

Rhapsody With Dark Matter by Jeff Gundy (Bottom Dog Press, c/o Firelands College, Huron, OH 44839, 2000, $11.25 postpaid) is the latest book of poems by a Mennonite writer who is published in *The Mennonite.*

Exodus by Waldemar Janzen (Herald Press, 2000, $24.99) is the latest volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series. This book presents essays on themes useful for teaching, preaching and Bible study; bibliographies; charts; a map and an index.

... also recommended

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology (Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, $12) is a new publication that "seeks to encourage theological reflection by church leaders on the identity, mission and practices of the church from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective." Published semiannually (Spring and Fall), the first issue focuses on "Spirituality." It includes articles by seminary professors and pastors. Notable here are "Facile Spirituality, Profound Love of God" by Harry Huebner and "What Is Healthy Congregational Spirituality? A Guide to Resources" by Marlene Kropf.—*gh*

Recommended reading

Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament & Contemporary Contexts by Joel B. Green and Mark D. Baker (InterVarsity Press, 2000, $15.99) argues that "not only in Scripture but throughout the history of the church's faith and mission, the significance of Jesus' death has been articulated in different ways at different times in different places." And while the church has creeds that define Jesus' person, "no such orthodoxy has ever existed with regard to the atonement." For the early church, "the scandal of the cross was far more self-evident than was its meaning," yet for many Western Christians today, the opposite seems to be the case. The authors challenge the popular fascination with and commitment to penal substitutionary atonement. They explain what "Jesus died for us" has meant at different times and in different contexts. They draw on the work of other theologians, including Mennonites John Driver, Gayle Gerber Koontz, C. Norman Kraus and J. Denny Weaver. Claiming that "the tradition of atonement theology is and must be a living tradition," this important book brings a needed correction to popular conceptions of the cross. Pastors and other teachers in the church need to grapple with its message.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

A new year for a new church (part 2)

Future begins at Nashville

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
—Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

This summer, during the first week of July, thousands of members from Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church congregations will gather for six days in Nashville, Tenn. Registration forms for the convention are in the mail. Youth groups continue their fund raising so they can attend the youth convention.

The Nashville event will be a historic gathering for Mennonites in the United States and Puerto Rico; if the delegates approve the proposals laid before them, a new denomination will be formed. The process which began in 1983 at a joint assembly in Bethlehem, Pa., will formally join the two largest Mennonite groups in the United States.

For those guiding the church on the road to integration, the Nashville gathering is the centerpiece of the year. Lee Snyder, who leads the Executive Board as moderator of Mennonite Church USA, will preside over the decision making at the delegate sessions in Nashville. In a recent email, she offered the words of Jeremiah 29:11 and described her hopes for this new year and the new day for our church.

My most fervent prayer...is that we might yield our limited understanding to the large assurance that God will bring to pass the work He has begun.—*Lee Snyder*

"My most fervent prayer for the Mennonite Church USA in the new year is that we might yield our limited understanding to the large assurance that God will bring to pass the work He has begun," Lee writes. "This yielding requires large doses of humility and a reverence for God's surprises."

There will undoubtedly be surprises at the Nashville 2001 conventions. Those who attended the delegate sessions at St. Louis 1999 may remember one particular surprise: a motion from the floor asking delegates to reaffirm Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. That parliamentary procedure—and subsequent defeat of the motion—caused great pain among the delegates and confusion about what it meant. The event also jump-started 18 months of discussions about membership criteria for the new denomination. In Nashville this summer, the session at which membership guidelines are considered will undoubtedly be the best-attended and most interesting.

However, the choices laid before the delegates this year come along less than once a generation. This is the year when two delegate bodies will be asked to form a new church. If plans hold, the actual moment will arrive when delegates vote on new bylaws and create legal unification. If the bylaws are not approved, presumably the two churches will remain in the present state of highly cooperative relationships with some parts merged.

While delegates are deciding whether to form a new denomination, the majority of those in Nashville will be at one of the other four age-specific conventions down the hall. Equally significant long-term change will be happening in those settings. For example, several thousand teenagers will experience youth convention for the first time. Their perceptions of Mennonite Church USA will change dramatically when they step into a hall filled with 5,000 teenagers and see the rich racial and ethnic diversity in our church. Many will be swept up in the power of the youth-oriented worship services. And, if past conventions are any indication, hundreds will answer the invitation to make a first-time commitment to Christ. Their experiences at Nashville will also be a profound part of the new future that God promises the church.

Lee Snyder claims Jeremiah's promises for Mennonite Church USA. In July we may discover God's plans that will prosper this new denomination and experience the hope that God will provide. Those who wish to be part of the moment can attend the gathering, speak in advance to a delegate about concerns and affirmations or pray for those leading the church in this new day.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

January 23, 2001

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who will lead the flock?

Doubly blessed
page 4

7 Q & A with Mennonite Church USA leaders

8 Church born out of kids ministry

10 MVS worker creating new unit, community

16 Unity happens

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Transcending culture

Re "Fake Latinos," Jan. 9: It has been said that imitation is the highest form of compliment. I do not doubt that there are "wannabes" among us, people who are having an identity crisis. However, on behalf of those who have invested prime years of their lives in sharing the gospel and bringing relief to people of other than North American cultures, I would like to offer the possibility that perhaps there are legitimate reasons for rejecting a North American identity. The tendency of North Americans of European descent is to consider their values and practices superior to those of any other people. Adoption of dress, language and foods foreign to North American culture may be an attempt to communicate appreciation for other cultures.

People who have lived outside North America for a number of years find that they will never be the same. They can never belong in their adopted culture, and they can never come home to their native culture. It is not surprising that they should have identity issues. It seems that compassion would be in order.

The one thing I would underscore from the "Fake Latinos" article is that all of us must find our identity in Christ. Let us encourage each other to cherish the good in each culture, to not adopt the nationalistic trends of the world but to remember that we are participants in a faith community that transcends national and cultural boundaries. As young people (and adults) travel more and spend more time in other countries, we will see more cultural blends. This is to be valued. Without an appreciation for people of other cultures we are prone to think of our own as superior, breeding racism.—*Miriam Martin, East Earl, Pa.*

Last evening as my daughter and I drove home, she commented (for the first time ever, I think) on an article in *The Mennonite*. She said, "Hey, Mom, Tobin Miller Shearer wrote this article called 'Fake Latinos.' " She was trying to understand it, and we will have more discussion on it later.

I picked up the Jan. 9 *The Mennonite* this morning and read most of the issue. I especially found Gilberto Flores' article insightful ("Dare to Become a Global Church"). If this could be used as a focal point for discussion at this summer's Nashville convention instead of driving our "favorite topic" into the ground one more time, we could gain a whole new perspective on what it means to be a faithful Anabaptist church.

Thank you for all the work you are doing to broaden our perspectives.—*Rachel Yoder, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

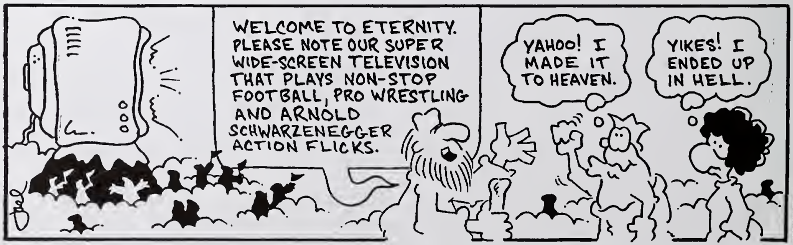
Collegiate cola concerns

Goshen (Ind.) College is considering an exclusive cold-beverage contract with a major cola company. This would mean that the company, in all likelihood Coca-Cola or Pepsico, would be granted exclusive rights to sell cold beverages on the Goshen campus. In exchange, Goshen would receive a stipend over the length of the contract.

Many students are concerned about this. They believe that this money does not come without strings and without dangers to the integrity of the college. They are concerned that, as has happened at other schools, criticism of the corporation will be stifled. They are also concerned about the theological and philosophical considerations of such a contract. Doesn't Goshen's Mennonite identity discourage such close connections with institutions of the world, especially those who, like Coca-Cola and Pepsico, have repeatedly demonstrated that their concerns are for nothing but profit?

Students at colleges and universities across the United States and Canada have asked their

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


WELCOME TO ETERNITY. PLEASE NOTE OUR SUPER WIDE-SCREEN TELEVISION THAT PLAYS NON-STOP FOOTBALL, PRO WRESTLING AND ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER ACTION FLICKS.
YAHOO! I MADE IT TO HEAVEN.
YIKES! I ENDED UP IN HELL.
Joel

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theMennonite

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schools to reject these deals, fearing for their academic freedom and integrity. Goshen should think long and hard before entering into this partnership.—*Josiah Groff, Goshen, Ind.*

Integrity, service and love

Re "A Missions-Minded Leader," Dec. 26, 2000: As an adolescent, David Thomas lived in my parents' home during his one year of study at Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, Va. His father, my Uncle Jacob, didn't much believe in education. He did, however, provide for a year of high school Bible for each of his sons. I roomed with David during the 1934-35 school year. A year older than me, he usually bested me in our boyish arguments and tussles.

At the time we were ardent stamp collectors. I once traded him a cover (envelope) with its printed two-cent, 1893 Columbian Exposition stamp. Several years ago, Thomas told me that he felt that he had taken advantage of me in that deal. He proposed to return the item if my wife and I stopped by for a visit in his home. Accordingly, the cover is in my collection again.

As a friend, cousin and brother in the faith, I am grateful for Thomas' modeling of personal integrity and service to and love of the church. —*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Disclaimer disagreement

Why was a disclaimer placed on Reta Halteman Finger's article "How Jesus Learned About Ethnic Discrimination" (Dec. 26)? May we assume all writers have friends, students and readers who agree or disagree with the premises of their contributions? Why single out this write with a disclaimer to her thesis?—*Ellene L. Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

Editor's note: The disclaimer was included by Finger as part of the article she submitted.

Cover photo by Luke Golobitsh

Doubly blessed

The pastors of tomorrow are growing up and living among us today.

by Alan Kauffman

Like flares sent into the darkness, the numbers draw our attention to the ongoing disparity between the many congregations needing pastors and the short list of pastors available.

On the surface, these numbers simply alert us to the fact that the emerging Mennonite Church USA has a pastoral ministry shortage. At a higher level, however, the statistical reports from ministerial leadership offices in Newton, Kan., and Elkhart, Ind., are intended to spark the fuse of congregational responsibility, igniting pastoral identification activity.

Far too many of us for far too long have equated pastoral development and the stream from which pastors come with seminaries and Bible colleges, oblivious to where they were before that, growing up in congregations like ours.

If we hope to have adequate pastoral leadership for the decades to come, we must begin refocusing our initial gaze from the seminaries and Bible colleges to those sitting in the pews beside us. The pastors of tomorrow are growing up and living among us today. And it is our responsibility as congregations to be identifying, encouraging and nurturing them to answer God's call in their lives.

If we hope to have adequate pastoral leadership for the decades to come, we must begin refocusing our initial gaze from the seminaries and Bible colleges to those sitting in the pews beside us.

In that respect, I consider myself among the doubly blessed: first, to have been raised in a congregation that was intentional about identifying pastoral gifts among its own, and now to have the privilege of pastoring a congregation that has been committed the past couple years to growing pastors. This is my story.

Fifteen years ago at the Mennonite Church delegate assembly in Ames, Iowa, 10-year goals were presented and accepted. These goals required more pastors than were available in 1985—500 more. The seminaries did not have 500 pastors enrolled. Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries' ministerial list would run dry long before it could expect to provide 500 pastors. The only lasting, viable source for potential pastoral leadership was to be found within the local congregations. The success of the 10-year goals was fully dependent on congregational participation.

Prayer and discernment: My home congregation, Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa., took that responsibility seriously and ignited with activity. In the fall of 1986, Maple Grove began an intentional process of identifying people within the congregation who had pastoral gifts. This process included sermons on the subject, a call to extended prayer and discernment. This resulted in six people being identified. Follow-up interviews and possible next steps were explored. Opportunities were given to test gifts and to discern further God's call. Encouragement, affirmation, hands-on support and financial resources followed as I took steps toward making a life-changing commitment. In August 1988, Nancy (my wife), our two boys (aged 7 and 9) and I left for Hesston (Kan.) College so I might prepare for pastoral ministry.

It was a significant step of faith. But we were able to take that step because we knew the Maple Grove congregation was taking it with us in measurable ways. The church included us for two years in its budget. A couple of Sunday school classes made us their project. The church regularly prayed for us, and we had a generous flow of correspondence and phone calls. I am a pastor now primarily because Maple Grove understood the call to identify future pastors as a personal, local responsibility.

'Grace, joy and peace': By the time the 10-year goals of Ames had run their course in 1995, the Mennonite Church still did not have an ample number of pastors available to supply the existing need. As the delegates approved the Vision: Healing and Hope statement at Wichita 95, implicit in the phrase "to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace" was the directive to "call and nurture congregational leaders for ministry in a changing environment." In other words, the local congregation still had the mandate of developing pastoral leadership. I was soon to discover that mandate included the church I was pastoring.

In 1997, following nearly seven years of pastoral ministry at Glade Mennonite Church, Accident, Md., I was blessed with the gift of a sabbatical. It was at some point during that sabbatical that I sensed God nudging me to be more intentional in providing opportunities for those with pastoral gifts in our own setting. A part of the nudging I sensed included my willingness to reduce from full-time support to three-quarter time, thus providing one-quarter time for a person wanting to explore pastoral ministry. To be honest, I wondered if I heard correctly. Following my sabbatical, I tested the idea with our board of elders. They also wondered if I had heard correctly. The discernment broadened as we invited the congregation's counsel. Leaving the known for the unknown is rarely easy. But the congregation took a bold step of faith when, in January 1998, we decided to intentionally work at become a "pastor-growing" congregation.

Gift-testing: The wheels of transition began turning. Chester Yoder, a member of a neighboring Mennonite church (Cherry Glade, of the Conservative Mennonite Conference), was identified and approved as the first quarter-time person. Our congregation had become aware of Chester's interest in ministry when he assisted the congregation during my sabbatical. It was determined that in August 1998 I would cut back to three-quarter time and Chester would be responsible for the other one-quarter time, focusing on his areas of giftedness and desired gift-testing.

An evaluation at the midterm of Chester's three-year commitment revealed an overwhelming sense of support for the congregation to continue in this mode. We also discovered a significant level of satisfaction in being part of a larger church effort by intentionally identifying pastoral giftedness and providing opportunities for those gifts to be expressed. That is above and beyond the blessings we have received from Chester's ministry, observing his growth and enjoying the life his wife, Trish, and sons Shane and Corey bring us.

Shortly after Chester began at our church, it became clear that God was calling a young adult from within our congregation to consider pastoral ministry. Again, the church responded with excitement and encouragement as Todd Brenneman was given opportunities to test the call he was sensing in his life.

A step of faith: Once it became clear that Todd's sense of call was solidifying into a step of faith, the congregation responded with the same vigor my home congregation had for me. When Todd and his wife of one year, Chelsea, decided to visit Hesston, Kan., the congregation covered the cost of their plane tickets that the college had not covered. When Todd decided to enroll at Hesston for the fall 2000 term, our vacation Bible school made Todd and Chelsea their project, hoping to cover the estimated $800 moving expenses from Maryland to Kansas. The children did so, plus a tithe for a total of $881.87. The congregation did not stop there. The recently approved budget contains a line item that ensures the Brennemans a monthly check. Plus all the adult Sunday school classes are collecting monthly offerings of money, stamps, writing paper and phone cards. A commitment to regular correspondence and prayer is also part of the support Todd and Chelsea enjoy from Glade.

Palmer Becker, director of the pastoral ministries program at Hesston College, reports, "Todd and Chelsea feel secure in their call and affirmed in their studies." From a pastoral perspective, Glade Mennonite Church (with an attendance of about 100) could not possibly have anticipated all God's Spirit would do in our midst when we committed ourselves to be a pastor-growing congregation. But the church has practiced what it has preached. Chester and Todd's testing of call has created energy, excitement and generosity.

Samuel Project: Currently the new Mennonite Church USA is trying to understand how people find themselves on the pastoral ministry path in a study called the Samuel Project. The study is sobering. Even after the 10-year goals from Ames and Vision: Healing and Hope from Wichita 95, only 5 percent of high school youth report having received definite encouragement to consider pastoral ministry. We must do better. I am not advocating that churches mimic my experience at Maple Grove or my experience as pastor at Glade. But my experience of being doubly blessed still appears to be the exception to the rule. We must creatively find ways to grow pastors in our settings. If the new Mennonite Church USA hopes to eliminate the obstacles that stand in the way of people hearing God's call to pastoral ministry, identifying and growing pastors must become more of the norm. If we can, perhaps the next time your congregation needs a pastor, one will be readily available.

Only 5 percent of high school youth report having received definite encouragement to consider pastoral ministry. We must do better.

Alan Kauffman is pastor of Glade Mennonite Church, Accident, Md.

Luke Golobitsh

Leading and following: joy or grief

Good communication is crucial to maintaining vitality in our life together.

by Marlin Birkey

In our congregations, leadership is exercised through the offices of pastor and elder (or deacon), those called to "tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it" (1 Peter 5:2).

The call to serve as a pastor or elder in the church comes from God and is tested and affirmed in the congregation. An aspiring leader's inner sense of call is submitted to the congregation for further discernment so that the person and the congregation can come to a clear sense of the Lord's leading. In this way, pastors and elders can joyfully use their gifts in service to the congregation, and congregations can gratefully acknowledge and receive the gift of leadership from God.

According to Hebrews 13:17, the work of leadership in the congregation can be done either with joy or grief. Sometimes pastors and elders create their own grief through inappropriate handling of relationships or an ineffective style of leadership. But sometimes grief is created by the way congregations respond when pastors and elders actually try to do the work they've been called to do, the work of leading. As one person said, "I believe in leadership—for other people." As much as pastors and elders need to learn how to be effective leaders, so do congregations need to learn how to be effective followers.

As much as pastors and elders need to learn how to be effective leaders, so do congregations need to learn how to be effective followers.

Following is easy and leading is a joy when everyone is in agreement. The true test comes when disagreement arises. All too often disagreement between people and their congregational leaders turns negative not because of the disagreement (people should not expect to think alike on everything) but because of the way it is handled. Disagreement often escalates into strife and tension in the congregation, turning our focus away from the vision to extend the reign of Christ. There is a way to handle disagreements without detracting from the unified focus of a congregration.

Sometimes tension arises between congregational members and leaders because of hurt feelings, perhaps through misunderstanding or hurtful comments or actions. Both parties are then under biblical obligation to handle the matter in a godly way, committed to communication. The biblical pattern, and the recommendation of the statement Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love: Commitments for Mennonites in Times of Disagreement, calls for direct, face-to-face sharing with the other person (see Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15-20). Such sharing gives opportunity for clarification of issues and testing of assumptions. We often operate on the basis of assumptions about what others think or feel or why they say or do certain things. But we cannot know what another person is thinking or feeling until we test our assumptions through open and honest communication. Face-to-face sharing, though risky and often scary, creates opportunity for confession, forgiveness and restoration. Since it is impossible to avoid all hurt and misunderstanding in our congregational life, good communication, which means honest, face-to-face sharing and good listening, is crucial to maintaining vitality in our life together.

Hurt feelings are not always the issue between leaders and congregational members. Sometimes a person may simply disagree with the direction pastors and elders want to take the congregation. What should people do who find themselves in disagreement with the leaders of the congregation?

1. Study: Believing that our leaders have been gifted, called and commissioned to understand and communicate God's truth and will, those who disagree must first study the Bible and pray for a biblical mindset, asking God to reveal truth and to expose any "selfish ambition or conceit" (Philippians 2:3) that might enter the situation. In this Philippians text, Paul also calls for humility, which demands that we remain open to the possibility of our need for adjustment or correction in our thinking. The Holy Spirit can make such adjustments as we study and pray.

2. Listen: If people are convinced after a season of study and prayer that the leaders are not being wise or truly biblical in their mindset or direction, they should prayerfully move to the next step, which again is communication. Go to the leaders and ask for clarification of their perspective. Share with them your disagreement and together seek God's heart for further direction. This step is critical for the simple fact that leaders are not infallible. They sometimes push their own agenda or misinterpret God's leading in a particular matter. God's people are always called to be discerning. God may work through the congregation to bring the leaders further into line with his plan.

3. Pray: Good communication may or may not resolve the disagreement. Leaders may feel compelled to hold their ground. Suppose a person hears the rationale and biblical basis for the leader's perspective and still disagrees.

Is the only option to pack one's bags and find another congregation? God forbid. The bonds of love that tie us together in congregations are meant to be deeper than that. The most godly recourse is diligent, fervent, persevering prayer. Pray for the leaders, that God open their hearts and minds to further truth and direction from the Holy Spirit. Pray the same for yourself. Pray for others, asking God to release truth, wisdom and discernment throughout the congregation.

There is no telling what God might do through such a commitment to prayer. God has more of an interest in truth and right direction for the church than we do. After all, the church is the body of Christ, his hands and feet working on the earth. God wants the church on course and focused. Any prayer for leaders to know and be obedient to the truth is in line with God's will. If God can make pagan kingdoms rise and fall, he can certainly bring any needed correction to his children.

However, many times we are impatient. Unconvinced that God will do what really needs to be done in a timely way, we take matters into our own hands and forge ahead with our attempts to make things as we think they should be. All too often, the results are painful. Prayer is the better way. Psalm 37:5 says, "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act." Above all, we must pray not to allow Satan to distract us from God's call to us, and to the rest of the congregation, to be of "one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27b).

Admittedly, there are some situations where this suggested way of dealing with disagreements and hurts may not be adequate. In situations where there is obvious abuse of power, such as sexual indiscretion on the part of the leader, a private, face-to-face confrontation is usually not possible. Victims of such abuse often need to tell their story to trusted people who will be able to serve as advocates in helping them confront the offender.

For most situations, however, a congregation's commitment to communication and persevering prayer will demonstrate good followership and help the leaders we have called do their work with joy, which is profitable for the entire congregation. And it will help people maintain unity of mind and spirit and focus on extending the reign of Christ.

Marlin Birkey is pastor at Ashton Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

Mennonite Church USA leaders

In this monthly feature, moderator Lee Snyder and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman answer questions about the new denomination. Readers are welcome to submit questions to <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 1-800-790-2498.

Courtesy photo

Are you optimistic or pessimistic about General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church transformation?

Both of us live on the edge of optimism, recognizing at the same time that being the church is sometimes hard work. We see many positive aspects of the integration process, primarily because it has given opportunity to work at real transformation. We particularly sense God's Spirit in the mission movement. We see a willingness in both denominations to work at understanding honest differences among us. Plans are emerging for a leadership office that projects new efficiencies to allow for new ministries such as a multicultural office. We worry that the issues of homosexuality and church membership may be getting more than their fair share of attention. While we recognize the legitimacy of various alignments, we grieve the loss of groups that have already decided not to join Mennonite Church USA. We encourage all groups to stay engaged in the process until the transformation process is complete.

The Executive Board has called the Nashville 2001 gathering a historic event. What is historic about it and why should people attend?

A number of things are scheduled to happen at the Nashville, Tenn., convention that may well be recorded in the history books: the last meeting of the delegate bodies of two different denominations; adoption of bylaws for a new denomination; delegate approval of new guidelines for church membership; approval of a plan of merger, including the reorganization of many church agencies; a new way of conducting business called "worshipful work." We invite people to make a special effort to come and be a part of these historic decisions, to participate in worship, work and study in the conventions for children, youth and adults, and to enjoy the uniqueness of the setting of Opryland.

Pennsylvania church, born out of kids ministry, responds to spiritual emergencies for all ages

READING, Pa.—When hospital workers hear "code blue," they rush to the scene of the emergency. At Reading's Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Code Blue is also about saving lives—those of at-risk children.

Every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening at 6:30, Code Blue Kids' Clubs, for children ages 4 to 13, meet in a narrow brick row home.

The clubs started four years ago when members at Zion Mennonite Church in nearby Birdsboro developed a burden for at-risk children in Reading. But last September, Code Blue took a new step: It was organized as a church and began meeting Sunday mornings. The new congregation celebrated eight baptisms in its first month.

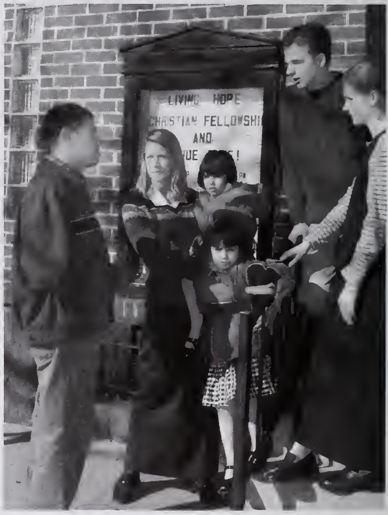
Living Hope has a core group of 15 people. One of the charter members is Lisa Donaldson, a single mother with two children. She said she had been away from God for years but sent her two sons to Code Blue and to Sunday school at another congregation. When her 13-year-old son told Donaldson he didn't want to go to church anymore, she remembered how she had dropped out of church in eighth grade because her mother didn't go.

"My kids were starting to do the very same thing I had done," Donaldson says. "It was a wake-up call. I looked for a church where we could go together. When Living Hope started, we all plugged in. We enjoy the informality."

The Dec. 3, 2000, worship service included a farewell to the three-member Youth Evangelism Service (YES) team from Eastern Mennonite Missions that had worked in the community for the past year. Living Hope's senior pastor, Gustavo Ramirez, led a special farewell prayer for the team. "Thank you for their love for your people," he prayed.

Although it was a farewell to the three official YES roles, it was not a farewell to Living Hope and relationships. All three members of the 2000 YES team plan to move back to Reading to continue working with the congregation and with a new four-member 2001 YES team that is moving into some of their old responsibilities.

"God has done more in us this year than what we have done," says 2000 YES team leader Karina Salas, a native of Ecuador. "It is awesome to see that a year ago we didn't have a church, and now we do."



EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Gustavo and Twila Ramirez (left) and their daughters, Madelyn (being held) and Miquela, visit with Conrad and Viki Esh outside Living Hope Christian Fellowship, a church plant in Reading, Pa. Gustavo is the lead pastor, and Conrad is the associate pastor. The congregation started in September 2000, emerging out of a program for at-risk children in the community.

Another international team member, Rene Muhe from Germany, said at first he was shocked to see how wildly many of the kids behaved and how many parents didn't seem to care. "We often found ourselves taking over the parental role," he said. "The kids even called us Mommy and Daddy."

During the Dec. 3 worship and prayer times at Living Hope, passion for Jesus and compassion for people surged through the storefront meeting room. A team of young musicians led bilingual Spanish-English worship with drums and guitars.

"Living Hope is about restoration, fellowship and equipping," Ramirez said. Then he prayed: "Lord Jesus, don't let us go without knowing you are real. Establish your kingdom. Let it come. Let your will be done."—*Jewel Showalter of EMM News Service*

Appointment a GC-MC first

Marco Güete is breaking new ground for both the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

Güete started in September as associate conference minister for the GC Western District Conference, working in the Dallas-Fort Worth area among a burgeoning Hispanic population. He is believed to be the only Hispanic serving as a GC conference minister. Güete is also the first GC member to be named an urban ministry director for Mennonite Board of Missions.

"What this says to me is that the new Mennonite Church that is emerging is open to working with people of color and integrating them into the mission of the church more openly," Güete says.

For the previous four years, Güete was director of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Bogotá, Colombia, serving with the Commission on Overseas Mission. —*MBM News Service*

2001 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The Bible DIGGING FOR TREASURE

THE BIBLE THEN&NOW

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Session	2 1/2 hrs	People Responsible
COMING TOGETHER Gather in small groups.	10 min.	Group leader
THE COMMUNITY GATHERS All groups gather for a Bible drama and other worship activities.	30 min.	Drama coordinator, Worship leader (Group leaders sit with their groups)
CONNECTING WITH THE BIBLE Have snacktime. Remember the story. Memorize Scripture. Choose from a list of activities.	30 min.	Group leader
THEN & NOW ACTIVITIES Participate in hands-on activities about Bible times and activities related to contemporary mission/service.	Two 35 min. sessions	Then & Now Activity leaders
CLOSING MOMENTS Small groups return to their own meeting places for a blessing and dismissal.	10 min.	Group leader

The Bible DIGGING FOR TREASURE

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- 1 Student Certificate
- 1 Staff Appreciation Certificate
- 1 Student Record
- 1 Bible Reading Record

2001
VACATION
BIBLE SCHOOL

The Bible
DIGGING FOR TREASURE

FIVE DAY OVERVIEW

The God of the universe, Creator of all, invites people into covenant relationship. The Bible tells the story of this covenant relationship, a story of God's faithfulness throughout the generations. The stories relating to Noah, Ruth, Josiah, Jesus, and Lydia appear in chronological order. Each of these stories shows the importance of God's word at work in people's lives. Some Then & Now activities help children become familiar with the Bible and Bible reference books. Others demonstrate how the Bible and its stories were valued and preserved over the years.

DAY	SESSION	SCRIPTURE	BIBLE FOCUS	FAITH MEANING
1	A Plan and a Promise	Genesis 6:11—9:17	Noah followed God's plan	God gave Noah a plan for safety in the flood and a promise for the whole earth. God's message shows us the way.
2	A New Home and Family	Ruth	Ruth, a foreigner, found a home among God's people	Ruth found protection, food, and happiness because God's people cared for her. Obedience to God's laws brings joy in difficult times.
3	Temple Treasure	2 Kings 22:1-13; 23:1-3	King Josiah led the people to renew their covenant with God	During the reign of King Josiah, a high priest discovered the book of the law in the temple. All the people of Judah again worshiped God. God speaks through the written Word.
4	Growing in Good Soil	Luke 8:4-15	Jesus told the parable of the sower	Jesus taught that we need to respond to God's word with wholehearted obedience. God lives in us when we listen to God's word.
5	An Open Heart	Acts 16:11-15	The Lord opened Lydia's heart to respond to the message about Jesus, the Messiah	Lydia gathered with others to pray each Sabbath. When Paul came to tell them about Jesus Christ, Lydia listened eagerly to God's message. God opens our hearts to the good news.

For more information about *The Bible: Digging for Treasure* and The Bible Then & Now Series for Vacation Bible Schools, visit your local Christian bookseller or contact us at the address below.

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Mission worker in Burkina Faso continues slow but rewarding work of Bible translation

NEWTON, Kan.—If you want quick results, Bible translation is not for you.

Ontario native Anne Garber Kompaoré has been a mission worker in Burkina Faso since 1982, working with the Sicite language group. During that time, she has seen the New Testament books of Mark, James and 1 John published in Sicite. Luke is in draft form, and three chapters of Genesis have been translated as well.

Kompaoré

Kompaoré first went to Africa in 1975, appointed by the Commission on Overseas Misison (COM) to serve under Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) in Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo). "It changed my life," she says. "It got me interested in linguistics."

Kompaoré came home to finish her undergraduate degree in linguistics at the University of Ottawa. Before returning to Africa—this time Burkina Faso—with COM-AIMM, she completed a master's degree in linguistics from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. She now also has a doctorate from Illinois.

"After [my] first term, there was an exhilarating story to tell, with lots of conversions and a church started," Kompaoré says. "Since then, it has been a long haul."

In 1993, Kompaoré married her husband, Daniel, a Burkina Faso native, educator, administrator and pastor.

Over the years, she has been part of the long, complex process of making Sicite into a written language. This has meant developing an alphabet, phonology, primer and dictionary as well as identifying native speakers who can be trained as the primary translators of the biblical texts.

To better assist translation work, Kompaoré has focused her efforts on understanding Hebrew. "It is important to understand how Hebrew is structured in order to [better] know how to translate the Old Testament," she says.

Kompaoré works at discourse analysis, also called text linguistics. This means "looking at the narrative or story from the way it's told: how [the writers] bring in characters; how the characters are referred to throughout the story; how they develop the story's climax," she says.

"Hebrew has a lot of repetition," Kompaoré says. "Some scholars say it's just bad writing. But if you look at it from a different perspective, it's the way they told the stories. A dynamic translation of the text attempts to be sensitive to the many nuances and facets, rather than just line-by-line."

Part of Kompaoré's Hebrew study was spending November 1997 to March 1998 at the Home for Bible Translators near Jerusalem. Her fellow students were all African men, learning Hebrew in order to translate the Bible into their particular languages. The students were asked to translate the book of Ruth from Hebrew into their native languages.

"I produced yet another English version," says Kompaoré, who wondered about the usefulness of working in English. "But in the end I'm glad I did. It helped me get a feel for the struggles of people translating into their own languages and convinced me of the importance of doing linguistic research. … I discovered I didn't know the structure of English narrative as well as I thought."

Kompaoré is now spending a year in North America continuing her study of biblical Hebrew.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and AIMM news services*

A dynamic translation of the text attempts to be sensitive to the many nuances and facets.

—Anne Garber Kompaoré

Photo by Jim Bishop

Huddled masses

Bruce Martin (top), campus pastor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., leads a commissioning prayer for two groups of EMU students who will spend the school's second semester on cross-cultural trips. Twenty-four will go to the Middle East, and 16 will go to Latin America. The commissioning took place Jan. 10 at the opening convocation for the second semester.

MVS worker creating new unit, community

MONTREAL—One does not have to be a lonely number. Lauren Clarke, the first and only Mennonite Voluntary Service worker in the five-month-old Montreal MVS unit, is living proof.

Clarke, a native of Kitchener, Ont., says she knew she wanted to come to Montreal since serving as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer on refugee issues during the summer of 1999. “I fell in love with being here,” she says. “I didn’t know there were thousands of other places to go [with MVS], because I just wanted to come here.”

As part of Montreal’s plan for being the Commission on Home Ministries’ City on a Hill, the Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal formed an MVS support committee. MVS contacted Clarke, and in September, she became the first MVSer placed in Montreal, working three days a week for La Maison L’Amitie (House of Friendship), a service provider for refugees, and two days for Mennonite Fellowship of Montreal, working with young adults.

Clarke

Instead of living alone or with a support committee member, Clarke sought out a community to replicate the community of MVS houses. “My life would have been very different if I had lived with Karen (Montreal MVS support committee chair) or in my own apartment,” she says, sitting in the living area of the 10-person intentional community she happily calls home.

Clarke lived briefly in the community during her first stay in Montreal after hearing about it through a fellow volunteer. When she returned, she learned there was an opening and joined the group.

“I feel like I’m leading a similar lifestyle [to that of] other MVSers,” says Clark, “but I’m living with more people. Not all of them are Christian, but they’re all involved in seeking peace and justice.”

Clarke hopes to welcome her first MVS coworker in June. Because of her experiences in the intentional community, Clarke and the MVS support committee want to start a “Menno House.” They hope it will provide a community for both the MVS unit as it grows and for Mennonite students interested in intentional community and living an active faith.
—Grant E. Rissler of GCMC and MBM news services

Summer session 2

June 18-29

The Revelation to John
Nelson Kraybill, Ph.D., AMBS

Pastoral Counseling and Theology
Daniel Schipani, Ph.D., AMBS

Faith Formation and Spirituality of Youth and Young Adults
Gareth Brandt, S.T.M.
Columbia Bible College

Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, D.Min.; AMBS
June Alliman Yoder, D.Min.; AMBS

Mission and Evangelism Institute Course
June 18-29

Gospel and Contemporary Culture
Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D.
Fuller School of World Mission
Adjunct faculty in Mission, AMBS

Continuing Education event
June 23

Youth Ministry: Reformer Conrad Grebel 2001
Gareth Brandt, S.T.M.
Columbia Bible College

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Additional courses are offered June 4-15 and July 30-August 10. Check the AMBS web site for full details: **www.ambs.edu.**

MCC assessing El Salvador earthquake needs

AKRON, Pa.—The Jan. 13 earthquake that rocked El Salvador spared Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) workers in that country and did not inflict any major damage in the towns where they work.

MCC, in cooperation with its partner agencies in El Salvador, is assessing needs in preparation for a response to the disaster. In the meantime, MCC is welcoming donations for reconstruction efforts.

Several MCC workers are already participating in relief work, including delivering clothes, food and supplies for shelter. Mennonite congregations in El Salvador are gathering supplies for earthquake victims, and groups from Guatemala are discussing ways to assist.—*MCC News Service*

MEDA gets to the (palm) heart of the matter

LIMA, Peru—A North American agency is now in business marketing a crop of which most North Americans have never heard. Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) has joined forces with a Peruvian farmers' association to export palm hearts to Europe.

Palm hearts—also called palmito and heart of palm—are a vegetable delicacy similar to artichoke hearts but with a milder flavor. They are popular in Europe, where they are used for pizzas, salads and antipasto plates.

Part of the impetus for the project is to wean farmers away from growing coca, from which cocaine is made. About 350 farmers are growing 1,200 acres of palm hearts. They had been involved in processing but wanted a partner to help improve production and marketing. MEDA owns 51 percent of the joint venture company.

The palm heart market is dominated by Costa Rica. But the Costa Rican variety needs to be replanted every year, while the Peruvian variety regenerates on its own for as long as 15 years. That could make the Peruvian palm hearts popular in environmentally conscious Europe, says Ed Epp, director of MEDA's international operation.—*MEDA News Service*

New year means new houses for MDS project

PRINCEVILLE, N.C.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), working in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity, started the new year by framing 12 houses in Princeville, a community still struggling to recover from hurricane-spawned flooding a year and a half ago.

MDS sent 31 volunteers to Princeville between Christmas and New Year's Day to jump-start a Habitat building blitz scheduled for the first two weeks of January. Among the volunteers were four brothers from J.Z. Shirk Construction in Denver, Pa.

"We heard [MDS] needed framers," said Randy Shirk. "We thought this would be a good way to donate time and labor."

Princeville is the fourth location established by MDS in response to Hurricane Floyd, which hit the region in September 1999. MDS has already repaired and rebuilt more than 70 homes in neighboring communities.—*MDS News Service*

Canadian delegation impressed with Colombians

WINNIPEG—With a membership of only 1,000 and limited financial resources, the Colombian Mennonite Church is carrying out inspiring ministries in a context of civil war, says a member of a Mennonite Church Canada delegation that returned last month from nearly two weeks in Colombia.

"The degree of hope, joy and vision present in a difficult situation impressed our delegation," says Robert J. Suderman, head of Mennonite Church Canada's Ministries Commission.

Suderman cited congregations planting churches, operating schools and providing care to families displaced by internal fighting.

One objective of the trip was to promote relationships between Canadian and Colombian Mennonites. The delegation visited eight Mennonite congregations and 11 Mennonite institutions, including schools, bookstores and peace initiatives.—*Canadian Mennonite*

this date in Mennonite history

Jan. 23, 1536—Three leaders of the Anabaptist takeover of the German city of Münster are executed and their bodies hung in cages from the St. Lambert's Church tower.

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Events

Dismantling racism storytelling weekend, Feb. 16-18, Dallas. For information, contact Dick Davis or Tammerie Spires, Peace Mennonite Church, 214-902-8141; email <pmc@airmail.net>.

Mennonite Health Assembly, March 22-25, Albuquerque, N.M. For information, contact Mennonite Health Services, 219-534-9689; email <mhsonline@compuserve.com>.

Workers

Gingrich, Byron and Virginia, Turner, Ore., will begin a two-year Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) assignment in March in Cusco, Peru, working in leadership development and education.

Miller, Sharon Wyse, was ordained for pastoral ministry Nov. 26, at Peace Mennonite Church, Burlington, Iowa.

Stutzman, Jerry and Sharon, Salem, Ore., this month complete 16 years of service with EMM in East Africa, most recently as missionary co-representatives in Kenya.

Births

Beyler, Zoe Margaret Snyder, Jan. 3, to Richard Beyler and Jenny Snyder, Portland, Ore.

Friesen, Adilynn Syvana, Dec. 28, to Crystal (Nunnenkamp) and Jason Friesen, Sutton, Neb.

Kachel, Madeline Rose, Dec. 19, to Craig and Lisa (King) Kachel, Lancaster, Pa.

Landis, Esther Joy, Dec. 20, to Jennifer and Lee Landis, Hong Kong.

Laurie, Cyrus Grant, Dec. 31, to Joey (Martens) and Kurt Laurie, Wichita, Kan.

Peters, Carson Jewel, Dec. 26, to Debbie (Koop) and Scott Peters, Steinbach, Man.

Schlabach, Micah North, Dec. 8 to Janet North and Fred Schlabach, East Barnard, Vt.

Schuck, Daniel Alexander, Dec. 18, to Helen (Wall) and Tim Schuck, Kitchener, Ont.

Steinmann, Travis Austin, Dec. 10, to Alyce (Schumm) and Todd Steinmann, Tavistock, Ont.

Stoltzfus, Ariana Jane, Dec. 26, to Chad and Liza (Jacoby) Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.

Stutzman, Trevor Christian Yoder, Jan. 4, to Barb and Rod Yoder Stutzman, Littleton, Colo.

Talbott, William David, Dec. 14, to David and Rhonda (Clemens) Talbott, Indianapolis.

Yeakey, Fiona Patrice Nofziger, Dec. 6, to Kathy Nofziger and Michael Yeakey, Millersburg, Ind.

Marriages

Frey/Huard: Kevin Frey, Archbold, Ohio, and Beth Huard, Edgerton, Ohio, Dec. 30 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Gaeddert/Regier: Beverly Gaeddert, Inman, Kan., and Loren Regier, McPherson, Kan., Dec. 31 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Kimball/Neal: Doug Kimball, Naperville, Ill., and Cynthia Neal, Wheaton, Ill., Dec. 27 at Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Richardson/Steinmetz: Sam Richardson, Goshen, Ind., and Leah Steinmetz, Bluffton, Ohio, Dec. 16 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Deaths

Keiser, Alta Brenneman, 98, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 26. Spouse: Ora Keiser (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Hershberger Brenneman (deceased). Survivors: son John; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

King, Martha Elizabeth Wert, 83, Westover, Md., died Dec. 26 of injuries from an auto accident. Spouse: Amos King. Parents: Joseph and Minnie Sieber Wert (deceased). Other survivors: children Elmer, Walter, Ruby Dorsey, Harry, Miriam Dagen, Dan, Rose, Bill, A. J.; 25 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover.

Nafziger, Ada Crossgrove, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 6. Spouse: Orval Nafziger (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Ida Crossgrove (deceased). Survivors: children Barb Aeschliman, Charlene Short, Sara Nafziger Nafziger; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Schrock, Joseph, 82, Archbold, Ohio, died Dec. 24. Spouse: Ada Schrock. Parents: Menno and Lydia Schrock (deceased). Other survivors: children Ann Mooney, Joseph, Thomas, Norma Hershberger, Douglas; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Sullivan, Alice Anna Ramseyer, 89, Pulaski, Iowa, died Nov. 29. Spouse: Robert Sullivan (deceased). Parents: Sam and Maud Ramseyer (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Scott, Roberta Veatch, Keith; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Bloomfield, Iowa.

Wilson, Lyle, 89, Gridley, Ill., died Dec. 30. Spouse: Edith Payton Wilson. Parents: Loyde and Frances Anderson Wilson (deceased). Other survivors: children Donna Thurman, Sharon Phelan, Richard, Norman; 17 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa, Ill.

Yutzy, Norman, 70, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 26 from a farm accident. Spouse: Lena Beachy Yutzy. Other survivors: children Lenora Bell, David, Charlene Jacob; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

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- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible** ***(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel** ***(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

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- **CROSS Inc.** seeks ***houseparents*** for personal-care home in St. Thomas, Pa., for six adults with developmental disabilities. Housing and benefits part of compensation plan. Call Becky Wenger at 717-530-1788 for information.

- **Friendship Community** has an opening for ***program coordinator and program supervisor***. This is an opportunity to impact a life and enrich your own. If you possess a college degree and at least 2 years of experience with people with mental retardation, please call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **The Lamplight Bed and Breakfast** will welcome you to the Mennonite college town of ***Bluffton, Ohio***. Five blocks off I-75, exit 140, at 321 S. Main St., you will find an 1890 Victorian-style home. There are two spacious rooms with individual baths and breakfast served by innkeeper Joan Bauman. Rates $65. For reservations, please call 419-358-0358.

- **Canadian Mennonite University** seeks full-time faculty position for September 2001 in ***conflict transformation studies and international development studies***. CMU seeks candidates committed to excellence in teaching and research in interdisciplinary perspectives in both international development and conflict transformation. Candidates who are qualified in only one of these areas may also be considered. Ph.D. in related field and commitment to education in an Anabaptist-Mennonite context are required; field experience is desirable. CMU is a liberal arts university, formed in 1999 as an association of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College in Winnipeg. CMU is committed to being a center for careful reflection on the integration of faith and life. Through Menno Simons College, CMU offers undergraduate majors in international development studies and conflict resolution/transformation studies, both on its own campus and in association with the University of Winnipeg. Processing of applications will begin March 1, 2001.

  Submit applications to Dean E. Peachey, Academic Dean, Menno Simons College, 380 Spence St., Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9. For further information, email <dpeachey@cmu.ca> or see <www.cmu.ca>.

- **All-Kalamazoo 1-W Reunion: *June 30-July 1 in Goshen, Ind.*** For information contact Elizabeth Kauffman, 14105 CR 22, Middlebury, IN 46540; 219-825-5986; or Etril J. Leinbach, 1801 Greencroft Blvd. Apt. 228, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-537-4971.

- **Interested in serving God** and using your leadership and management skills and abilities in church relations in a new location? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for country representatives to serve in ***Tanzania, Congo and Ethiopia***, starting summer 2001. Application review begins immediately.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker for copies of these job descriptions, 717-859-1151; email <cdb@mcc.org>.

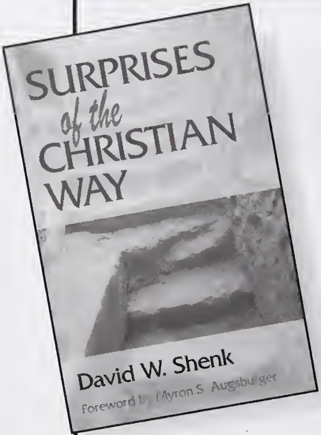
- **Opportunities for service! *Eastern Mennonite Missions*** has current opportunities as follows: medical personnel in rural Guatemala; teachers for a variety of settings for missionary children, in Christian schools and TESOL in countries like Albania, China, Thailand, Honduras, Vietnam and others; church planters in Albania.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Mount Joy Mennonite Church** seeks candidates to fill two or more positions which together will cover four areas of responsibility: ***youth, outreach, pastoral care and Christian education***. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options of part-time or full-time, if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time.

  Mail resumes, in confidence, to Allen Heinly, 929 Wood St., Mount Joy, PA 17552; or contact Joe Sherer, 717-653-1528, email <joesherer@paonline.com>.

Surprises of the Christian Way


SURPRISES of the CHRISTIAN WAY
David W. Shenk
Foreword by Myron S. Augsburger

After 2,000 years, the gospel continues to surprise if only we let it. David W. Shenk's goal in *Surprises of the Christian Way* is to do precisely that: to enable, not only longtime Christians, but also seekers wondering why the gospel matters to be surprised anew by the fresh and amazing power of Christian faith to transform lives.

Written in simple and anecdotal style, this book invites all readers to enter the teachings and stories of the Bible and make them their own.

"A winsome witness to God's amazing work in the world. I will share this book with seekers, acquaintances, and friends to introduce them to the healing and hope that God brings into the world."—*Ervin R. Stutzman, Dean, Eastern Mennonite Seminary*

"A helpful guide for Christian student fellowship groups; each chapter includes discussion questions and Bible verses."—*Edita Vaikasaite, Leader of Klaipeda University Christian Student Fellowship, Lithuania*

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by Rich Preheim

Books to bucks

"Left Behind" has put its publisher way ahead in the business of Christian literature. In fact, the series of best-selling books has Tyndale House smiling all the way to the bank and bursting at the seams.

"Left Behind," about a post-rapture world, first appeared five years ago and has evolved into a projected series of 12 novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. More than 23 million copies of "Left Behind" items have been sold, including audio books and a children's series. "This series has been successful far beyond our expectations," Tyndale president Mark Taylor tells *Christianity Today.*

The Carol Stream, Ill.-based publisher has seen annual earnings triple in the last three years, with a net revenue of $122 million in the last fiscal year. Taylor would not reveal Tyndale's net income, but he says it is far above the profits of other large Christian publishing companies.

Because of the extraordinary sales of "Left Behind," Tyndale has had to add an extra 25,000 square feet of office space and constructed a new 60,000 square-foot warehouse. Plans are in the works for even more warehouse space for "Left Behind" books.

Staff size has also increased, jumping from 200 to nearly 350 in the last two years. Each full-time employee last year received sizable bonuses at midyear and year's end.

Part of the success of "Left Behind" has been the attention the series has received from general retailers. And that could help propel Christian publishing to greater acceptance in secular arenas. Christian publishing "used to be its own subculture," says Lynn Garrett of *Publisher's Weekly.* "That's not the case anymore."

Religion's realms

Religion can be beneficial to American public life, or at least parts of it, according to a recent survey. In some areas, respondents fear, increased religiosity could be dangerous.

Public Agenda, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, polled more than 2,000 people on the role of religion in public life. Seventy percent of those surveyed said they wanted religion's influence on society to grow—and 76 percent said it didn't matter which religion. If more people were more religious: 87 percent said people would do more volunteer and charity work, 85 percent said parents would do a better job of raising their children, 80 percent said crime would decrease and 70 percent said there would be less greed and materialism.

But when it comes to hot-button issues such as politics and prayer in public schools, the survey found a greater wariness about the role of religion. While 53 percent supported the idea of a moment of silence in public school classrooms, only 6 percent wanted a Christian prayer mentioning Jesus. Twenty percent supported a prayer that refers to no specific religion, and 19 percent said there should be no prayer of any kind.

In the political arena, about 60 percent of respondents said elected officials need to be willing to compromise with other officials on controversial issues such as homosexual rights, abortion and the death penalty.

Concerns about religion in public life were higher for non-Christians. For example, 54 percent of Jews and 67 percent of nonreligious respondents said prejudice against religious minorities would increase if Americans were to become deeply religious; only 31 percent of the general public shared that sentiment.

Time for not doing time

With President Clinton's tenure in the White House coming to an end, he received a Christmas present from 675 U.S. clergy: a petition to grant clemency to certain federal prisoners incarcerated for at least five years on "low-level, nonviolent involvement in drug cases."

"Scores of Americans are serving unconscionably long sentences … which are grossly out of proportion to the nature and severity of their crimes," the petitioners wrote in their letter to the president.

Among those signing the petition were Catholic priest Robert F. Drinan, Episcopal bishop Shelby Spong, Ken Sehested of the Baptist Peace Fellowship and Marian Defeis, a chaplain at New York's Rikers Island prison.

A guy thing?

It may be all that testosterone that keeps men from church, reports *ChristianWeek.* A sociologist at the University of Washington theorizes that elevated testosterone makes men more likely to engage in risky behavior, including risking going to hell by shunning religion. A similar risk-taking phenomenon occurs in criminology. More men than women commit violent crimes, and some criminologists think that testosterone is linked to short-sighted risk-taking.

Tidbits

- George W. Bush is the third Methodist to be elected U.S. President, following Rutherford B. Hayes and William McKinley. —*Christian Century*
- There are about as many Church of the Brethren members in Nigeria (130,000 to 140,000) as in the United States (138,000). —*Messenger*
- Nineteen percent of Christians believe they can find sexual fulfillment online.—*Christianity Today*
- Forty-five percent of U.S. congregations have more than $1 million in liability insurance, while 8 percent have less than $100,000. —*Leadership*

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Everett J. Thomas

A new year for a new church (part 3)

Unity happens

We expect a new Mennonite denomination to be formed in Nashville, Tenn., during the first week of July. The Scripture text chosen for the Nashville gathering is that great hymn from Colossians 3, which calls Christians to be clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, and then to cover those virtues with love which "binds them all together in perfect unity" (vv. 12,14).

The theme for the adult gathering is "In Christ, Held Together." The youth convention planners are more directive with their motto: "Get It Together in Christ." Clearly planners of the two events want participants to focus on unity during this time when a new denomination is forming.

But unity for its own sake will not provide an enduring motivation for the new church. Unity for the sake of the gospel, however, is a compelling reason to bridge our differences and is the only purpose which will bring long-term health and strength to the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

Jesus' prayer for Christian unity in John 17:23 is often offered as the context for the transformation in Mennonite Church USA.

The reason for unity is to spread the gospel. When the great, good-news mission of the church is the organizing principle, unity happens.

However, Jesus' request that God help his followers "become completely one" was for a purpose beyond simple unity. His petition had a purpose: "so that the world may know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." The reason for unity is to spread the gospel. When the great, good-news mission of the church is the organizing principle, unity happens.

Anytime a group is single-minded in its pursuit, individual convictions and perspectives are subordinated to that purpose. For several years I coordinated a pancake-and-sausage breakfast at our local relief sale for Mennonite Central Committee's projects. The volunteers for that breakfast came from Beachy Amish, Conservative Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations. The group did not worship together and certainly could not have been a congregation, but it delighted in long, cold mornings of raising money for food that would be offered in the name of Christ. While we never discussed our theological differences, the bond of this Christian cause unified us for one morning each year.

What larger cause could inspire the integrating Mennonite Church USA to such action and cohesion? There is only one: the great commission.

When a group is single-minded in its mission, differences of perspective and opinion are subordinated to the greater good. Of course, moving a group with such a single-minded purpose does require careful leadership. Marlin Birkey (page 6) calls congregational leaders to be sure that disagreements do not escalate into strife and tension, thereby "turning our focus away from the vision that God has placed before us to extend the reign of Christ."

Such leadership is also needed for the new Mennonite Church USA. To assist those leading our denomination, *The Mennonite* created a question and answer feature (page 7) that will run monthly until July and perhaps beyond. This format provides moderators Lee Snyder and Ervin Stutzman a place to answer questions for our readers. In doing so, we hope our readers will better understand the profound task of moving this new denomination beyond disagreements and toward a vision which will extend God's kingdom.

The great mission of the church is to let others know that God loves them as much as God loved Jesus. The practicalities of such a purpose are expressed in evangelism, planting new congregations and strengthening our storied mission programs. If all who join the new denomination are filled with devotion to this cause, we will know the unity that Jesus asked for all Christians. God's healing and hope will indeed flow through Mennonite Church USA to the world.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

January 30, 2001

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Help the spiritual life of our students

page 4

6 Jesus Christ: warrior and judge
8 L.A. congregation helps city's homeless
9 Short-term missions are beneficial
16 Compassion, inspiration, Super Bowl wisdom

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Identity issues

"Fake Latinos" (Jan. 9) brought tears to my eyes because of mixed emotions toward its contents. I grew up in Argentina until I was 15, a daughter of missionaries working and living with the Toba and Pilaga people as well as with a local Catholic charismatic group. For the last nine years, I have struggled as a young adult with how my childhood experience affects my life here in the United States. I work as a postpartum registered nurse with multiple opportunities to share with Latina women about children, lovers and the daily struggle of life in a country that doesn't speak their language and considers their presence illegal.

I feel the article excluded and even threatened the joy I experience discovering the Argentine-ness that was woven in my life before I could choose who my friends were, what language I spoke and where I was born. These same threads now surface and find common bonds with those I work with and love.

My Mennonite heritage is also a prominent part of my lifestyle choices. My pale skin that reddens and freckles with the sun tells of my Swiss-German background and my families in rural Ohio and Pennsylvania with historical commitments to community, peace and simple lifestyles.

I agree that we should not take on another culture glibly without continuing to question the intricacies of who we are and what culture is. However, my experience sharing the cultures that have taken hold of me leads me to seek out others who are prepared to challenge society's simplified definitions of what makes us who we are. I have only found more of who I am by celebrating these cultures that are part of me, and I don't feel I am cheating either one. —*Melody Mast, Harrisonburg, Va.*

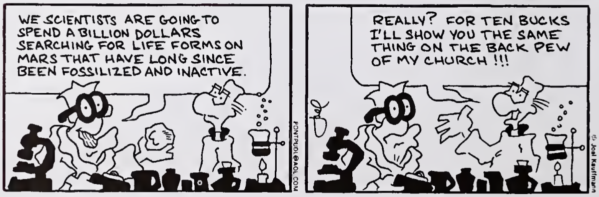
I must be a very fake person. I'm a fake Canadian because although my passport is Canadian, I wasn't born there and I have never really lived there. I'm a fake Zairean, for although I was born there, that's not what my passport says, and I hardly have any memories from the four years I lived there. I am a fake Brazilian because even though I spent seven of my 13 years there growing up, I spoke English at home with my Canadian parents. I am a fake American because I am living here although the government considers me to be a resident alien.

Fake is a strong word, one that I never like to use. No person, whatever he or she calls himself or herself, is fake, because we are all created in the likeness and image of God, and we are all alike in God's eyes.

Questions I have often been asked are "Where are you from?" and "What are you?" I have never found easy answers to these questions because I have no one culture. My skin color is white, my accent is Canadian, my manner of praying and meditating are definitely Brazilian. I do not consider myself a fake person. I consider myself unique, and I am proud that I don't have to be just American or Canadian or Zairean or Brazilian. I can be a blend and mix of everything, which is what God wants us to be.—*Gabrielle Plenert, Elkhart, Ind.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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REALLY? FOR TEN BUCKS I'LL SHOW YOU THE SAME THING ON THE BACK PEW OF MY CHURCH !!!
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I found it more than a little ironic that the Jan. 9 issue, calling us to become a global church, contained the condescending and disturbing "Fake Latinos" article. Maybe we all need to take a deep breath, claim our commonality as "heirs with Christ" and keep in mind that God isn't finished with any of us yet.

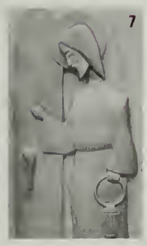
P.S. Amen and amen to Gilberto Flores' direct and thoughtful examination of issues that have haunted and hampered Mennonite missions for years ("Dare to Become a Global Church").—*Debra H. Bender, Chicago*

Remembering a peace activist

I was saddened by the news of Atlee Beechy's death ("Peace Advocate, Goshen Professor Dies at 86," Jan. 9). My acquaintance with Beechy began after his accomplishments listed in the short article. In the late 1980s, I joined the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section staff in Akron, Pa. Beechy was still quite involved in MCC peace and justice issues and meetings, and I always looked forward to his visits. He exuded an ageless energy, along with the wisdom of his years. As a newly arrived, nonethnic Mennonite—and a woman—I especially appreciated Beechy's immediate invitation to me into his circle of friends. He was gifted with the ability to find, embrace and

theMennonite

Vol. 4, No. 4, January 30, 2001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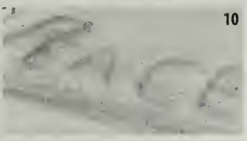
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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

readers say

inspire peers and allies, young and old alike, wherever he went with his message of peace and personal gentleness. He and his generation of elder peace activists will be missed. *—Alice M. Price, La Jara, Colo.*

Blueprint for peace and justice

Brother Conrad Moore is right: Volunteering for different service projects and activities is nice and safe ("How We Celebrate Martin Luther King Day," Jan. 9). In my opinion, there is no room in our society for that warm and fuzzy feeling. We are called to step out of our comfort zone and be life-changers for justice, equality, peace and Christ. Didn't King stand for just that?

When I am reminded of King, I instantly think of Jesus the martyr. Just as Jesus did, King stood apart from the norm. Instead of engaging in violence to equal violence, King spoke of nonviolence. He talked the talk and walked the walk. Time and time again, Jesus showed us throughout his three-year ministry that peace and love accompanied by the knowledge of God are all we need to be life-changers.

Just as Jesus told Peter that he would betray him, so too did King have a revelation of his impending death. When he gave his last sermon on April 2, 1968, he spoke the immortal words: "Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place, but I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will."

Jesus and King have given us the blueprint for peace and justice. They have equipped us with the moral and ethical soundness to trek this journey, remembering that racism and inequality are not warm and fuzzy but hard and ugly. We need a proactive solution for that journey.*—Archie L. Knight, Sellersville, Pa.*

**Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt**

Church School Day, Feb. 4, 2001

Memo to the administration

Spiritual life must play a greater role in our Christian schools.

by Rich Lindberg

Colleges and high schools are to prepare students for life in the adult world. This can be said for any higher education establishment, Christian or not, but Christian schools have the added responsibility of preparing each student spiritually. For young people, spiritual life is important, yet it seems the spiritual needs of students in Christian schools are not being met. For students to graduate with a high awareness of God and a desire to walk with God, spiritual life in schools must play a larger role.

When students graduate, will they be prepared for what they are about to face? This is a question that each faculty and administration member at every Christian school must ask. High school and college students need to experience spiritual growth while in school. When students graduate, they are thrust into a work world that is often mean and rough. The beliefs of Christian graduates may be challenged extensively. They will face many different ethical decisions. Many people have the mentality that success means stepping on and over others while climbing the proverbial corporate ladder. Others may get chewed up and spit out.

When students graduate, they are thrust into a work world that is often mean and rough. The beliefs of Christian graduates may be challenged extensively.

Life after school can be gloomy, and there is little that is sweet about the everyday working world. If people's spiritual lives are dormant or weak, they will struggle. Beliefs they have held that were not encouraged because of complacent teaching and unchallenging worship may take flight.

To combat this, students need a firm spiritual base. Since most of a student's time before entering the working world is spent in school, chapel services and Bible studies must be challenging and deep. Students need basic spiritual teaching, but they also need to hear about such topics as racism, nonviolence, apathy, judging others, the importance of doing God's will, fasting, dying to self, the meaning of baptism, financial stewardship and spiritual healing.

Schools should teach from Scripture. Jesus continually challenged his disciples and his antagonists, and Paul did the same. Read the book of Jude to students, then teach from it. Read Matthew 18:15-18 when you talk about forgiveness, then explain verse 18. Read the Beatitudes and explain each one. One could teach a week's worth of chapels on Matthew 5:3-12. Have a student read Revelation 2:7. Ask students if they have ears, and challenge them on this point. Look students in the eye; question them directly and do not sugarcoat your message, whether the message is positive or negative.

Lukewarm: One reason spiritual life in Christian schools is lacking is that many students only participate in events that are required or mandatory. College and high school students are busy and do not always have time to take part in extra Bible studies or worship times. While Bible classes and chapels may be part of their lives, often little emphasis is placed on biblical learning in those settings. Many young Christians do not take part in services with challenging worship or teaching. Students are afraid their comfort zones will be pushed. Therefore, if mandatory chapels and Bible classes are not connecting, then students may become lukewarm in their walk with Christ.

The strongest young Christians I've known have been the ones who took part in challenging worship and teaching or have taken it upon themselves to seek Christ. It is a choice students make, and they put more time into nonrequired Bible study. Others have been on a plateau, their spiritual life not advancing. They may have accepted Jesus, but there is no edge, no sureness that will help them when they graduate.

Much of the accountability for not making spiritual life more important rests on students. Students are busy. Often there is so much to do that all the work pushes spiritual concerns to the side. Social life and the desire to be accepted also take up time. Most students would rather hang out with their friends than

Marilyn Nolt

attend an intense worship time. Spiritual concerns take a back seat.

Spiritual leaders: I spent four years at a Mennonite high school in Pennsylvania. While my education was wonderful, the spiritual emphasis was lacking. Some of my classmates and I felt this strongly. We wanted to see members of the administration talk about their spiritual walk during chapel services. We wanted to hear their thoughts on God. Instead, all we heard from administration was about laws—what we could do and could not do. These are important to tell students, but who is the spiritual leader in the school? Teachers provided support, but they were too busy teaching to give consistent leadership for spiritual activities.

In my high school, students were definitely the spiritual leaders. That is not necessarily bad, but students should not have the responsibility of providing spiritual examples by themselves. It is powerful for students to hear their teachers and administrators stand up in a chapel service in front of the entire student body and give a testimony. Such an action endears the faculty and administration to students and gives them something to think about. Suddenly teachers are not just teachers, and the administration is not some supreme ruler and disciplinarian; they are all a part of the spiritual life of the school.

Christian schooling is not only about laws and work but also about spiritual life. When the faculty and staff care enough to give their testimonies, they show the importance of a student's walk with Jesus. Students will have more respect for their leaders.

Hearts on fire: In any Christian high school or college, you will find many people who have a strong walk with Christ. There will be faculty and administration members whose hearts are on fire for the Lord, and that fire will spread throughout the school. In the Mennonite high school I attended, there was a group of students who led Bible studies and organized a community worship service.

God is clearly present in schools, but there is much lacking. Faculty and administration need to challenge their students. In high school, students should start learning about deeper issues in the Bible, then apply what they learn. College students should likewise be involved in deeper studies of Scripture, and in both places, spiritual life must be consistently encouraged, discussed and acted upon by school leadership and faculty. High school and college students need to be challenged spiritually. If required classes and chapels do not make an impact on students, then the spiritual life of those students may decline or plateau.

When the faculty and staff give their testimonies, they show the importance of a student's walk with Jesus.

Rich Lindberg is an undergraduate student at Temple University in Philadelphia and attends Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa.

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difficult texts of the Bible

Their entire army was killed by the sharp sword that came out of the mouth of the one riding the white horse. And all the vultures of the sky gorged themselves on the dead bodies.
—Revelation 19:21 NLT

Jesus Christ: warrior and judge

Tenth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Lawrence E. Burkholder

Is it true that unconditional love for enemies is uniquely at the core of Jesus' character and teaching? Likely many Mennonites would answer with an unequivocal yes. This conclusion seems unchallengeable in light of various texts. Note, for example, Jesus' words in Matthew 5:44, "I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Why? "So that you may be children of your father in heaven."

Love for enemies, as a reflection of God's own character, also is evident in Romans 5:9-10. Paul states that our salvation consists precisely of the fact that we who were God's enemies have been reconciled to God and exempted from divine wrath through Jesus' death. Jesus' death for us while we were in a state of hostility to God demonstrates the very essence of his unconditional love for enemies. Or so it appears until we get to Revelation 19:11-21.

I believe the Holy Spirit's word for Mennonites today is better expressed by Jesus' warning to the church at Pergamum than by the declaration of the destruction of the nations.

In this passage, Jesus Christ is identified as the One who is "Faithful and True." However, this same Jesus "judges and makes war" (v. 11), "is clothed in a robe dipped in blood" (v. 13) and "from his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations … he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God" (v. 15). How is it that the Jesus who died on the cross to reconcile God to us can kill his enemies and feed their flesh to the birds of heaven, as verse 21 states?

How do we interpret this troublesome text? A fruitful approach is to focus on two images we find in there: Jesus the Warrior Messiah and Jesus as Righteous Judge.

The picture of Jesus the Warrior Messiah takes its cue from the reality of evil's invasion into creation. The good news is that we have been created to live in a love relationship with God for eternity. The bad news is that human sin makes such a relationship impossible. Knowing all this even before the earth's creation, God predetermined a twofold plan (Ephesians 1): to cleanse the cosmos of evil introduced by the satanic rebellion and to bring salvation to people. Both parts of God's design are being fulfilled by the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Serpent, chaos and the crocodile: The purification process has been messy—violent, if you like—from the beginning. The Old Testament hints at it in reporting Yahweh's battles against the rebellious cosmic monsters Leviathan, Rahab, Tiamat and Behemoth. These evil and destructive adversaries are also given less mythical names such as the serpent, chaos and the crocodile. In the Old Testament, God is unveiled as Divine Warrior in texts such as Isaiah 59:16-18 and 63:2-6, passages directly related to Revelation 19:11. In his book *Yahweh Is a Warrior*, Mennonite author Millard Lind shows how God battles also against earthly opponents who pursue evil. The Old Testament everywhere and in every way reveals God as the one who fights evil both in the heavenly and earthly realms.

The New Testament is explicit in its declaration that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14). Therefore, in his death on the cross, Jesus victoriously stripped the cosmic demonic powers from himself (Colossians 2:15) and struck a fatal blow to Satan's kingdom. Nonetheless, although the watershed battle has been fought at Calvary, the serpent Satan—or Leviathan, Rahab and so on of old—still lives, even though his destiny is to be thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

Against whom and for what reason does Jesus make war? At this point, the image of

Warrior Messiah begins to blend with that of Righteous Judge.

Make war: Jesus waged war through his atoning death on the cross. The resurrected Jesus wages war with the sword proceeding from his mouth. The same general idea is in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where Jesus slays the lawless one with the breath of his mouth. It is found also in both the Old Testament and intertestamental literature. Wherever it appears, the sword in the mouth is a figure of judicial condemnation and total destruction of that against which Jesus speaks. The verb "make war" is significant since there are only two places in which Revelation speaks of Jesus making war. In chapter 19, he wars against the nations, an inclusive word that refers to all people who have rejected God's righteousness. In 2:16, Jesus warns the church at Pergamum that if they do not repent, he will make war on them, since, although they have been true to his name, they nonetheless have committed the sin of Balaam.

I believe the Holy Spirit's word for Mennonites today is better expressed by Jesus' warning to the church at Pergamum than by the declaration of the destruction of the nations. The sobering question for me is this: Is the church of Menno also committing the sin of Balaam? In Scripture, Balaam is ultimately a tragic figure. Against the express wishes of King Balak of Moab, Balaam had involuntarily blessed Israel (Numbers 22-24). However, in the New Testament he is blamed for Israel's terrible apostacy with Baal at Shittim. On that occasion, a prince of Simeon's clan had ritual sexual intercourse with a Moabite princess in the Tent of Meeting (Numbers 25). The spiritual result was that the Hebrews illicitly linked Yahweh to demonic Baalism. The historical result was a plague that wiped out some 24,000 Hebrews. In likening Pergamum to the apostacy at Shittim, Jesus is issuing a most dire warning about idolatries in his body, the church.

Unholy linkages: To be called to account by Jesus Christ is not comfortable. I recall Wichita 95, where a brother at the floor microphone asked us to add "holiness" to the proposed Vision: Healing and Hope statement. He called us to account and was turned down. The irony is that I supported the idea because I thought the church needed to become holy—but not me. It took some loving but hard-nosed discipline from the Lord in 1998 to show me the truth about myself. I learned that there were some powerful and evil idolatries in my life. As my eyes have been opened, I see more clearly how we commit Balaam's sin anytime we make unholy linkages between Jesus Christ and Baal. For Mennonites, this means everything from saying that Jesus is merely the most complete way to God, to denying the reality of his atoning death, to uncritical acceptance of a host of illicit spiritualities, to actual harboring of the demonic.

Whatever the situation, Revelation 19:11 makes it clear that Jesus does not ignore sin forever. Yes, his cross is sufficient. Yes, his love is unconditionally available to all. But no, his forgiveness is not unconditional. Repentance and turning away from deception, idolatry and untruth go in tandem with forgiveness.

In conclusion, one might ask, Is God, and therefore Jesus Christ, naturally warlike? The message of the Scriptures is that God has only ever fought to recreate what evil destroyed: a good creation filled with joy, holiness, peace and righteous purpose. "Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches" (Revelation 2:17).

Lawrence E. Burkholder, Markham, Ont., is the author of a forthcoming book on deliverance healing.

God's love is unconditionally available to all. But his forgiveness is not unconditional.

Paul M. Schrock

Los Angeles congregation 'stands in the gap' to provide refuge, shelter to city's homeless

LOS ANGELES—Chuwang Pam points out the contrast that isn't visible to the naked eye.

"You see those beautiful downtown lights?" asks Pam, a Mennonite pastor in Los Angeles, while driving toward downtown. "At the bottom of those high rise buildings is Skid Row."

Skid Row covers about 10 square blocks in the heart of Los Angeles. At night, large cardboard boxes line the streets as more than 15,000 people with no other place to call home gather to sleep at the foot of the corporate city.

Los Angeles County has more than 100,000 homeless people. People of all nationalities and backgrounds here are homeless. Some are trapped by drug addictions, while others couldn't keep up with rent payments. Women and children are now the fastest-growing segment of Los Angeles' homeless population.

An unemployed person may receive as little as $225 monthly from the government, and even the cheapest hotels in Skid Row charge $25 a night. Add food, and one month's check can easily run out in a single week.

So Pam's congregation, Los Angeles Faith Chapel, opened a shelter for the homeless in 1998. "It was just based on compassion," he says. "People were coming to our church who didn't have food or a home. We started feeding them, then we started housing them."

The congregation's Faith Chapel Mennonite Shelter provides as many as 14 people with food and a place to sleep. The shelter charges $200 per month, and residents are required to attend worship services and abstain from drugs and alcohol. The congregation plans to open a second shelter this year.

"First you minister to people's needs, then you offer them the Word," says Grace Pam, Chuwang's wife, who works as a support person for shelter residents. "Success stories can happen when you remind people that God is ready and willing to direct them."

Wilma Burns, 63, is the shelter's "housemom," cleaning and cooking two meals daily. At one time homeless, Burns says she prayed for the day when she could settle in somewhere. She learned of the new shelter through attending Los Angeles Faith Chapel, and saw it as the perfect opportunity. "It's my ministry," Burns says.

Since first meeting with five members in 1996, Los Angeles Faith Chapel, now numbering about 100 members, has been ministering in many ways to Los Angeles' poor. Members distribute donated food and clothing, provide a community fellowship meal on Sundays and hold weekly intercessory prayer meetings. "The Bible says that God is always looking for people to stand in the gap," Pam says.

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Chuwang Pam, pastor of Los Angeles Faith Chapel, and his wife, Grace, stand in front of the building the congregation recently purchased for its second homeless shelter.

Through a grant from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the congregation has purchased a 16-passenger van for the shelter that Pam now drives through Skid Row every Sunday. He sometimes makes two trips, bringing people to Faith Chapel for worship and a meal.

He first came to California from his native Nigeria in 1977 to study film production in Hollywood. After graduating, he returned to Nigeria, where a few years later he received his call to the ministry. Pam and his wife returned to Southern California in 1994 to minister.

A Mennonite friend introduced Pam to the Center for Anabaptist Leadership in Pasadena. Intrigued, Pam participated in CAL's three-month course on Anabaptism and was later ordained a Mennonite minister. Supported by MCC, he now serves as CAL's associate for African and African-American ministries.

Most congregations CAL assists are small, new and international. CAL, which is supported by MCC, helps those congregations initiate neighborhood ministries, write grants and connect recent immigrants with local services.
—Maria Linder of MCC News Service

Second conference to join new church

No hanging chads or recounts in Pacific Northwest Conference. Conference delegates have overwhelmingly supported Pacific Northwest joining Mennonite Church USA should the new denomination be approved at this summer's General Conference Mennonite Church (GC)-Mennonite Church (MC) convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Eighty-eight of 120 mail ballots have been returned, all of them positive of the measure, Pacific Northwest moderator Marion Schrock reported to the conference board on Jan. 6.

"While this vote does state the obvious for us as an integrated conference, it also strongly declares ... that we want to move forward," Schrock says.

Pacific Northwest is one of three integrated U.S. area conferences and becomes the second to announce its intent to join Mennonite Church USA. Pacific Southwest took similar action last year.

TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • January 2001 • Issue 4

A gift we ask of the denomination: gathering the consensus of the church

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth...and the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." (Rev. 21:1a, 5)

We want to be a God-centered people. Our first love and loyalty is to God. This is the way we make our choices and define our lives.

God is the one who loves and cares for us. God's kingdom has come in Jesus and it will come in its completeness when God says so, said our Anabaptist forbears. Our spiritual parents looked at the Sermon on the Mount and said that Jesus expected that his teachings were to be lived in this life.

Rachel Smith and Owen Burkholder are staff for Virginia Mennonite Conference. Owen is a former moderator of the Mennonite Church General Assembly.

Even in a world where many have turned their backs on their creator, we can be a God-centered people *now.* We want to live in the spirit of Jesus now. That is what we ask our congregations and our denomination to reflect. As God-centered people we want to be empowered to live in the spirit of Jesus here and now.

How do we know what this God is like? How do we know about Jesus? We trust the written Word to be an accurate, adequate and faithful reflection of God who has come to us in Jesus Christ as borne witness by the community of faith. Our foundation as God's people in Mennonite Church USA is in the Scriptures.

If we are to be a biblically literate people, our families need to provide a biblical foundation for our children - to reassure them that God is here with us just as God was with His people in history. In our congregational life, we must provide basic Bible teaching and begin our discerning work.

Out of congregational discernment comes work with sister congregations and out of the discernment of congregations and conferences comes discernment like a Confession of Faith, a consensus statement on how to interpret the Scriptures in our time.

This is a gift that we ask of the denomination. Continue to gather the consensus of the church on the doctrines and the ways of practicing our faith.

We need God's guidance in this discernment. If we think we can bring together these two faith family systems by our own intellect we will fail. But if we will humbly lay before each other our own histories and acknowledge that it is this great God of ours who will guide us into the future that awaits us, who knows what God can do among us?

Owen Burkholder is conference minister for Virginia Conference. His comments are from his sermon at First Mennonite Church, in Berne, Ind., March 2000.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Construction begins on new mission system

With a little more than a year left before the launch of a new U.S. mission center, a lot of work remains ahead. So it was appropriate that the first thing given to the person selected to oversee this transition phase was a hard hat.

Erwin Rempel, former executive secretary for the Commission on Overseas Mission and more recently COM's director of development and church relations, will serve full-time over the next six to nine months as transition project leader in the USA. But Rempel won't be the only one getting his hands dirty.

Board and commission members (from left) Kenyetta Aduma of Mennonite Board of Missions and Elizabeth Soto Albrecht of the Commission on Overseas Mission use their nametags to affirm the proposed missions system, adopted unanimously by the joint mission boards in late October during meetings in Excelsior Springs, Mo.

Eleven inter-agency staff project teams have begun to develop detailed transition plans for everything from a congregation-based mission training system to international program development. Staff from COM, the Commission on Home Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions will participate.

At the same time, a wide-ranging search process has begun to find a new executive director for the USA mission center. A seven-member search committee already is receiving information about internal and external candidates.

Erwin Rempel dons a hard hat given him by staff in preparation for a new six- to nine-month assignment as transition leader for the Mennonite Church USA mission agencies. Rempel will oversee the work of nearly a dozen staff committees working on detailed transition plans from the current mission structures to a new reality. Chief executive officers of the existing Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church mission agencies will focus on continuing operations until a transition is complete early in 2002.

The position requires visionary and strategic skills, spiritual leadership, strong capabilities in organizational development and executive management, the ability to develop collaborative partnerships with a wide range of groups and strong relational and communications skills.

Send inquiries and applications to Herman Bontrager, Search Committee chair, 908 Oak St., Akron PA 17501. Call 717-859-2519 or 717-355-2995 or e-mail <hbontrager@onemain.com>.

Mennonite Church USA

TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • January 2001
Photo credits: page one photo – Don Clymer, Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions; page two photos – Tom Price, Mennonite Board of Missions; page three photo – Ron Rempel, *Canadian Mennonite*

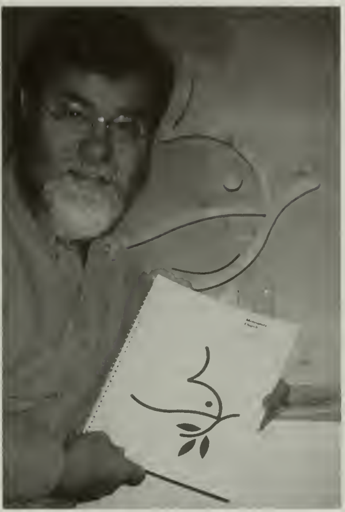
Printed in U.S.A.

Meet the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board

MC and GC delegates at St. Louis 99 affirmed an Executive Board to work on their behalf during this biennium. The Executive Board will recommend bylaws, a plan of merger and program proposals for approval by delegates at Nashville 2001.

In the coming months, please pray that God will guide these leaders in shaping a new church that can respond in faithfulness to God's purpose for us as Mennonite Church USA. "We are on a new threshold of expanded relationships that will strengthen our witness together," says Jim Schrag, executive director designate.

Executive Board members include Lee Snyder, moderator, Bluffton, Ohio; Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect, Harrisonburg, Va.; Don Barnhill, Walnut Hill, Fla.; Cleon Claassen, Moses Lake, Wash.; R. Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.; Leslie Francisco, III, Hampton, Va.; Susan Gingerich, Goshen, Ind.; James M. Harder, North Newton, Kan.; Pat Hershberger, Woodburn, Ore.; Harold Miller, Corning, N.Y.; Shoua Moua, Arvada, Colo.; Ruth Naylor, Bluffton, Ohio; Duane Oswald, Fresno, Calif.; Jane Peifer, Lancaster, Pa.; Lois Thieszen Preheim, Aurora, Neb.; Edwin Rempel, Littleton, Colo.; Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Norma Wiens, Newton, Kan.; Roy Williams, Land O'Lakes, Fla.; and Diane Zaerr, Elkhart, Ind.



Visual image help available Glenn Fretz, designer of the new visual image for Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, displays visual identity materials. When your conference, congregation or organization is ready to design stationery, literature, signs or other materials using the new Mennonite Church USA symbol and logo, Glenn is available for assistance free of charge. Contact Glenn at <gfretz@home.com>.

New funding system will be introduced

As Mennonite Church USA puts its new funding system in place during 2001, Mennonite conferences, congregations and agencies have an opportunity to take stewardship education one step further.

For more than 10 years, through the work of Lynn Miller and through *The Giving Project*, Mennonites have worked to cultivate a perspective of gratitude-driven generosity. The development of a new funding system for Mennonite Church USA offers an opportunity to demonstrate what we've learned.

One task, of course, is to make sure that contributions continue to get from givers to the agencies they want to support. In addition, a funding implementation team will help households, congregations and ministry organizations better understand the theological underpinnings of lives lived in response to God. The team is planning:

- A series of introductory Sunday school lessons that will be posted on the Internet
- A traveling workshop that will introduce the new funding system in spring and summer area conference gatherings
- An MMA-sponsored Stewardship University workshop that orients church leaders to the new funding system
- Congregational narrative spending plan workshops that will still be available to conferences who want to sponsor them

For more information, contact Mark Vincent at <DesignForMinistry@prodigy.net>.

No ordinary mission or church

On my office wall hang seven pictures, including two from the *Martyr's Mirror.* One shows a drowning, the captor thrusting the head of an Anabaptist into a shallow pool. The other depicts the good-byes of a child to his father. The boy's arms are clasped around his father's neck as his parent is led, bound, to the stake.

Three frames on my wall contain quotations from Oliver Wendell Holmes and Henry David Thoreau. My favorite is from Holmes: "To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it - but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor."

There are two quotes from Scripture: Isaiah 6:8 - "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, 'Here am I, send me!'" I received this verse from my pastor at my baptism when I was 13. The other quote reminds me of Jesus' words from Luke 9:62 - "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God."

These words and images are not only for me, they are for all of us.

Our expression of the Gospel was preserved in blood. I dare not compare our experience to the martyrs, but one truth disturbs our comfort: Something more than ingenuity is required to forge a new Anabaptist fellowship. We aim at nothing less than a united witness. We seek a new solidarity of purpose in Christ. When these goals lead us, sacrifice is unavoidable, precisely because this is no ordinary mission, no ordinary church. We expect opposition - from without, but also from within.

So pray in these days for courage more than wisdom; for faith more than certainty.

Jim Schrag
Transformation Project Director and
Executive Director designate
Mennonite Church USA

In Christ, held together
Nashville 2001
Colossians 3:12-17

JULY 2-7, 2001
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As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV)
(Nashville 2001 scripture text)

It's time to register for Nashville 2001!

Registration forms for Nashville 2001, the Mennonite Church USA Assembly for all ages, are in the mail. Bulk copies have been sent to each congregation and additional forms are available on request.

The assembly, July 2-7 at Opryland, features programs and activities for adults, young adults, youth, junior high youth and children. The assembly begins Monday evening with opening worship at 6:30 p.m. and continues through noon Saturday. "Tending the church" delegate sessions will review membership guidelines and bylaws early in the week and focus on the future vision and ministry of the church later in the week.

Prayer teams are being formed to pray for assembly activities before and during Nashville 2001. If you'd like to be a part of this prayer team, indicate your interest on the registration form. Some scholarship money is available for those who need financial assistance to attend the assembly. Apply immediately to Nashville 2001 Scholarships, 421 S. Second St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; 219-294-7131, <registration@Nashville2001.org>.

Four pre-assembly events are planned, including a two-day peace gathering for all ages, "Bring Forth the City of God!," in Monteagle, Tenn., 90 miles south of Nashville; and three pre-assembly workshops on Monday, July 2, in the Opryland facility – "Worship for the 21st Century," an all-day event for pastors, worship leaders and musicians; "Foundations for Church Planting," an all-day seminar for conference leaders and church planters; and MMA's Stewardship University, "Helping you organize life so God can give you away!," with a choice of four workshops from 1-4:15 p.m.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Despite negative experiences, short-term mission is beneficial work, consultation participants say

ROSEMONT, Ill.—The stories repeatedly showed that unless their motives are right, participants in short-term mission can run into a wall or see their efforts go up in smoke.

In Tijuana, Mexico, a youth pastor who organizes short-term projects for church groups finds out quickly whether they come to serve the community's needs or to insist they have a better way of doing things. "For the ones who insist they know a better way, he takes them to a wall and says, 'Folks, paint this wall,' " Jorge Vallejos, Mennonite Board of Mission (MBM) Short-Term Mission director, told a Jan. 11-13 consultation on short-term mission. "The wall has 30 or 40 coats of paint."

In Denver, one man eagerly awaits church youth groups to distribute Bibles. "Do you want to know what [the Bible] paper is good for? Rolling marijuana," said Glen Balzer, director of the Mennonite-affiliated DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection), which organizes efforts in Denver, Chicago and Miami. "One guy gets led to the Lord four or five times a year. When he runs out of paper to roll his joints, he gets led to the Lord. ... The groups go away thinking they're leading someone to the Lord."

More than three dozen people attended the consultation, organized by MBM and held in Rosemont, to discuss "The Impact of Short-Term Mission on Congregational Life." Short-term experiences make up the fastest-growing segment of mission and account for more than 90 percent of all mission assignments.

"I believe the most important reason for going on a short-term mission trip is discipleship," said Del Hershberger, coordinator of Group Venture, a program of MBM and the Commission on Home Ministries that helps congregations plan short-term mission experiences for groups. "Discipleship involves a journey of walking with Jesus and others who are followers of Jesus. It is imperative that the mission trip be placed in the context of learning and growing, of waiting and listening, with a healthy dose of humility."

Group Venture last year began providing orientation sessions for group leaders to help them prepare their participants, primarily high school-aged youth, for their mission experience. "Going with all the answers suggests either an unbelievable arrogance on our part or an unwillingness to be open to learn based on our larger picture of God and the world that we encounter," Hershberger said.

But with sufficient pre-trip orientation and a commitment to "do no harm" in the host community, he said, the participants in short-term mission can have their lives transformed.

Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church is located "in a very rural, sleepy community ... pretty far removed from any of the urban centers of Ohio," said pastor Terry Shue. "The number of short-term mission workers [from the congregation] has helped to increase our worldview as a congregation."

As it hosts short-term experiences, the Los Angeles Faith Chapel has encountered its share of insensitive participants. Some participants felt they had come "to teach us" and expected to be taken to Disneyland and Universal Studios, said pastor Chuwang Pam.

But, he said, "Overall, short-term mission has truly, truly been a blessing to us."

Pam described the times when participants build relationships with the congregation and are able to share their gifts in the community. "When that happens, the day or evening a participant is leaving, you should come to our church. It is like the participant is dying," he said. "Two months later, two years later, we're still making references to them. There is a relationship, and it is long-term."

While proponents say short-term mission introduces participants to a lifelong commitment to service, critics say such efforts perpetuate stereotypes, create dependency and destabilize the communities being served. Yet consultation participants saw room for short-term mission with integrity, particularly when connected to long-term ministry initiatives and done with respect for local cultures and needs.

"I know of long-term missionaries who do a lot of destruction too," Balzer said. "It's not whether you are short- or long-term, but it is an issue of where the heart is.

"If their mission is, 'We're coming to Denver to bring Jesus Christ to the city,' that sounds nice and sweet and theologically lousy. Jesus Christ is alive and well in Denver. Before you can bring Jesus to a situation, you need to discover where Jesus is."—*Tom Price of MBM and GCMC news services*

Going [on a short-term mission trip] with all the answers suggests either an unbelievable arrogance on our part or an unwillingness to be open to learn.

—Del Hershberger

MBM-GCMC photo

Robert Shreiner (left), pastor of Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., talks about short-term mission as part of a panel discussion during a Jan. 11-13 consultation. Other participants included Indiana-Michigan Conference minister Nancy Kauffmann (center) and Kent Miller of Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Peace on earth

Two Goshen (Ind.) College students stroll by an encouraging message left in the snow on campus. But the mood is not one of total tranquility, as northern Indiana has endured record snowfall this winter. Another campus snowbank featured the words "Surf and Sand."

Ryan Miller

MCC sends relief to flood-ravaged Cambodia

AKRON, Pa.—Since October 2000, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has donated more than $70,500 for relief in Cambodia, where heavy rain and flooding last September caused widespread damage.

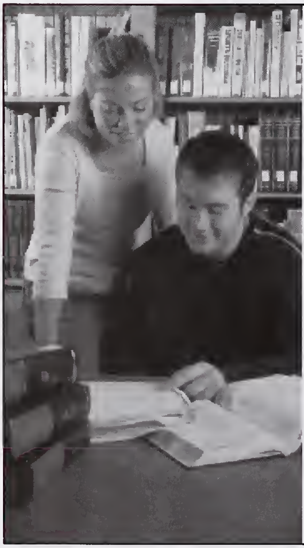
The most recent assistance came last month when MCC and Eastern Mennonite Missions joined efforts to distribute 2,655 school kits to children at four schools. Each kit consisted of a cotton tote bag, five notebooks, two pens, two pencils, one eraser, one ruler and one slate.

"As we walked into each room, the children shouted in unison, 'We welcome you' and, 'Thank you for coming,' " reports MCC worker Patty Curan.

She says she noticed water stains two feet high on many classroom walls.

Earlier assistance included food, seeds and agricultural tools. MCC staff and partners have distributed rice seed and hoes to nearly 1,000 families. They have also helped build culverts along a main road.

The Cambodian government estimates the country lost $63 million worth of crops and livestock.—*MCC News Service*



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Mission workers change with Lithuania

ELKHART, Ind.—Nurturing Christians to maturity takes "years and years of careful work in small steps," says Jim Brown.

Brown and his family—wife Sharon and their three sons—have been taking small steps since their big step of moving to Klaipeda, Lithuania, in 1999 with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Jim and Sharon serve on the theology faculty of Lithuania Christian College in Klaipeda.

Theology is one of five majors at the young college. Established in 1990, it offers courses in business, languages, theology and social sciences to 350 students and the community.

Brown teaches such courses as "Introduction to New Testament," "Christian Life and Ministry," "Peacemaking and Justice," "Christian Caregiving," "Biblical Interpretation" and "Wisdom Literature of the Bible." He also leads a student discussion group that focuses on building relationships and improving English communication skills. Sharon developed and teaches "Introduction to Old Testament" and "Women in Church History."

But interaction with students is not limited to the classroom. Informal times may include checking in with students and playing a game of street hockey behind the student dormitory.

In addition, Brown preaches twice a month at Free Christian Church in Silute, about an hour from Klaipeda. "I preach through the use of an interpreter, and our informal conversations are also often through an interpreter," he says. "Although there are several English speakers in the congregation, Lithuanian is a fairly difficult language to learn."

Language, however, has not kept the family from building relationships with students, translators, schoolmates, faculty and staff members and with the congregation in Silute.

"Personally, I feel very connected and [at] home in this congregation," Brown says. "We have developed a closeness and bond that is not dependent on words. For me, I suspect it will be as hard or harder to say goodbye to the congregation as it will be to the college."

But to live life is to experience change, especially for the Browns during the past two years. Just to live in Lithuania or at the college is to embrace change. The college is young and growing rapidly, he says. The same goes for the country. Independent since 1991, Lithuania has been working hard to rebuild itself and its economy. Beyond that, it is facing rapid Westernization.

"Sadly, a lot of what has been imported has not been the healthiest or most morally edifying parts of [North American] culture, such as media, fashions and a consumer mentality," Brown says.

That adds to the challenge of the Browns' mission to "encourage students to open their minds and hearts to think new thoughts and to think in new ways, whether that is about faith or their life or their community," Brown says. "I challenge them to develop positions they are willing to commit themselves to and live by." *—Siegrid Richer for MBM and GCMC news service*

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this date in Mennonite history

Jan. 30, 1536—Menno Simons withdraws from the Roman Catholic Church.

Swiss school adds master's degree program

LIESTAL, Switzerland—Students at the Bienenberg Theological Seminary, started 50 years ago as the European Mennonite Bible School, can now work toward master of arts degrees in pastoral ministries. The degrees will be granted by the University of Wales, according to an agreement between the two schools signed last month.

Bienenberg officials hailed the new program as the first master of arts program for the free church in German-speaking Europe. Theological studies in Germany, Switzerland and Austria are dominated by Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed state-related churches.

Bienenberg also offers an undergraduate program in theology, a discipleship training school and extension programs. Twenty-seven students are enrolled in undergraduate studies, and 11 are in the post-graduate program.

Manitoba office assists Mexican Mennonites

WINKLER, Man.—Winkler is once again home to a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) office to assist Mennonites migrating from Mexico to southern Manitoba. The office offers assistance in navigating the complexities of moving to Canada, including applying for citizenship papers, work permits and more.

"It's mostly paperwork we do. We don't do counseling here," says Abe Rempel, a local Old Colony minister who volunteers at the office.

A similar office opened in Winkler in the early 1980s with MCC funding. But local interest and MCC contributions dropped in following years. Twelve to 17 people use the new office each week.—*MCC Canada News Service*

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Events

Anabaptist Evangelism Council, Feb. 16-18 in Elgin, Ill. Keynote speaker is Stuart Murray, Anabaptist scholar and church planter from England. For information, contact S. Joan Hershey at New Life Ministries, 800-774-3360.

Stewardship University, March 9-10 at Maple Grove Conservative Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio. For information, contact Mennonite Mutual Aid at 800-348-7468 ext. 576.

Births

Bechtel, Dalton Zane, Dec. 18, 2000, to Kimberle (Chamberlain) and Scott Bechtel, Goshen, Ind.

Buckwalter, Micah Robert, Jan. 9, to Marian and Steve Buckwalter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Franz, Nathaniel Dean, Jan. 7, to Angela (Reed) and Michael Franz, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Geiser, Eric Amos, Dec. 12, 2000, to Bobbi (Gray) and Steve Geiser, Wooster, Ohio.

Gingerich, Grace Noel, Nov. 10, 2000, to Atlanta (Yoakam) and Dennis Gingerich, Dundee, Ohio.

Hitt, Grace Marie, Jan. 7, to Steve and Suzanne (Fransen) Hitt, Cincinnati.

Hummel, Jacob Virgil, Nov. 8, 2000, to Dallas and Jenny Bishop Hummel, Harrisonburg, Va.

Ingram, Kathryn Rhiannon, Jan. 2, to Naomi Goertz and Chris Ingram, Cincinnati.

Jess, Ashley Shae, Dec. 19, 2000, to Norma (Miller) and Wilbur Jess, Greentown, Ind.

Keim, Kayli Alexis, Dec. 30, 2000, to Karen (Groff) and Robbie Keim, Charm, Ohio.

Kratz, Peter Hostetler, Dec. 27, 2000, to Chuck and Trish (Hostetler) Kratz, West Liberty, Ohio.

Kuch, Riley Parker Gering, Dec. 4, 2000, to Jennifer Gering-Kuch and Ryan Kuch, Ritzville, Wash.

Leonard, Karen Wangare, March 9, 2000, received for adoption Nov. 10, 2000, by Glenda Kratz and John Leonard, Nairobi, Kenya.

Lewton, Gretchen Nicole and Kolten Lewis (twins), Dec. 8, 2000, to Jason and Melisa (Gerber) Lewton, LaGrange, Ind.

Lyda, Caitryn Mae, Jan. 10, to Lorrie Lyda and Christopher Methner, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Parmer, Simon Bailey, Jan. 8, to Kirsten (Nafziger) and Trevor Parmer, Harrisonburg, Va.

Pressel, Anneliese Noel, Dec. 14, 2000, to Deborah (Stone) and Kevin Pressel, Kouts, Ind.

Schloneger, Allison Joy, Dec. 6, 2000, to Heather (McKee) and Jeffry Schloneger, Louisville, Ohio.

Stoltzfus, Quinn Robert, Dec. 31, 2000, to Harlan and Michele (Myers) Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Benner/ Freed: Scott Benner, Souderton, Pa., and Angela Freed, Souderton, Dec. 1, 2000, at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton.

Fougeron/Miller: Tosha Fougeron, Milford, Neb., and Jeremy Miller, Milford, Dec. 30, 2000, at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Gnagey/Korzun: Ryan Gnagey, Laingsburg, Mich., and Lauren Korzun, Mobile, Ala., Dec. 30, 2000, at Mobile.

Kalugina/Kraybill: Maria Kalugina, Moscow, Russia, and Peter Kraybill, Lancaster, Pa., Jan. 6 at Lancaster (Pa.) Theological Seminary.

Lockett/Stutzman: Larry Lockett, Chicago, and Shelby Stutzman, Washington, Iowa, Dec. 22, 2000, at Washington (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Roth/Santos: Kurt Roth, Iowa City, Iowa, and Geraldine Santos, Philippines, Dec. 30, 2000, at Iowa City.

Deaths

Alderfer, Erma Keller, 93, Lansdale, Pa., died Nov. 9, 2000. Spouse: Lewis Alderfer (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Florence Souder Keller (deceased). Survivors: children Geraldine, Marily Ritter, Elizabeth Nyce, Lorraine Shoemaker, Kathleen Young; 20 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.

Bacher, David, 78, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 17, 2000. Spouse: Dora Belle Bacher. Parents Joseph and Mary Gingerich Bacher (deceased). Other survivors: children Nancy Boer, Nelda Kennell, Twila Brenneman; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at Cazenovia (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Bauman, Almeda Martin, 85, Elmira, Ont., died Jan. 7. Spouse: Clarence Bauman (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Sarah Knarr Martin (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 10 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Gerber, Nina Miller, 71, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Jan. 5 of diabetes and cancer. Spouse: Myron Gerber (deceased). Parents: Abram (deceased) and Elizabeth Miller. Other survivors: children Kenneth, Brian, Rebecca Miller; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Gingerich, Alma Miller, 84, Dundee, Ohio, died Jan. 1 of Alzheimer's complications. Spouse: Pete Gingerich. Parents: Peter and Linda Schlabach Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Raymond, Edna, Elizabeth Stempfley; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Mast, Mary Miller, 91, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Jan. 3. Spouse: Dan Mast (deceased). Parents: Eli and Elizabeth Weaver Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Marion, Willis, Larry, Maxine Hershberger, Marlene Eggeman; 11 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 6 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Mecum, Dorothy Blough, 92, Middlebury, Ind., died Dec. 28, 2000. Spouse: John Mecum (deceased). Parents: Amos and Clara Yoder Blough (deceased). Survivors: children Stella Robertson, Stanford, Hubert, Patricia; stepdaughters Viola Nusbaum, Betty Elliott; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Middlebury.

Miller, Rosa Delagrange, 81, Leo, Ind., died Dec. 29, 2000. Spouse: Lavern Miller (deceased). Survivors: children and foster children Max Miller, Donald Miller, Rob Hartnett, Tony Jones, Dawn McFarland; 14 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 2 at Fort Wayne, Ind.

Mishler, Merrill, 85, LaGrange, Ind., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Helen Miller Mishler. Parents: Milton and Mary Yoder Mishler (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruth Basinger, Rose Miller, Retha Philhart, James, John; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

Steiner, Mabel, 86, Bluffton, Ohio, died Dec. 27, 2000. Survivors: children Robert, William; four grandchildren; four great grandchildren. Memorial service: to be held in summer at Ebenezer Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Stutzman, Clifford, 93, Hesston, Kan., died Dec. 27, 2000. Spouse: Lillian Wenger Stutzman (deceased). Parents: William and Fanny Birky Stutzman (deceased). Survivors: children Donnell, Douglas, Duane; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Wolff, Lydia Schroeder, 84, St. Joseph, Mich., died Dec. 26, 2000. Spouse: Edward Wolff. Other survivors: children Edith Nickel, Christine Clodfelter, Doris Stucky, Rita Cox, Gene; 14 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at St. Joseph.

Yordy, Doris, 65, St. Johns, Mich., died Dec. 17, 2000, of pneumonia. Parents: Charles and Mary Yordy (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 21 at St. Johns.

Yutzy, Rosena Weirich, 81, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 18, 2000. Spouse: Dan Yutzy (deceased). Parents: Levi and Elizabeth Zehr Weirich (deceased). Survivors: children Regena Weir, David; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 22 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

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For details contact

Bethel College 800-522-1887 Bluffton College 800-488-3257
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Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has one opening for ***single person*** for a one-year voluntary service assignment beginning May 1.

For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Lancaster Mennonite School** seeks a ***director of advancement***. LMS serves 870 students in grades 6-12 providing a quality, Christ-centered education from an Anabaptist perspective. The successful candidate will direct others involved in the development office of the school.

For more information, contact Richard Thomas at 717-299-0436 or email <thomasjr@lmhs.com>.

- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a five-week ***teaching program in China*** this summer. One week of orientation and sightseeing in Beijing is included. Teaching experience is not required.

For more information contact CEE, 1521 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; <ChinaEdEx@aol.com>; web <www.chinaeducationalexchange.org>.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

- **Opportunities for service! *Eastern Mennonite Missions*** has current opportunities as follows: medical personnel in rural Guatemala; teachers for a variety of settings for missionary children, in Christian schools and TESOL in countries like Albania, China, Thailand, Honduras, Vietnam and others; church planters in Albania.

If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Middlebury, Ind., invites applicants for full-time position as ***youth minister*** and two half-time positions in ***pastoral care and outreach ministry***. There is flexibility in the two half-time positions, which may be combined into one full-time position if the applicant possesses appropriate gifts to perform both roles. Please indicate your area of interest when applying. All positions are available immediately.

Mail letters of interest and resume to Search Committee, First Mennonite Church, 203 E. Lawrence St., P.O. Box 508, Middlebury, IN 46540; or contact Linford Martin at 219-825-5135.

- **Over the Bent World Brooding: Responsibility and the Arts. *The Fifth Literary Arts Festival*** by the Milton Center and the English department of Newman University, Wichita, Kan., Feb. 16-18. Panel discussions include "Sacred Tradition and the Individual Talent," "Rembrandt and Social Conscience" and "Social Conscience and the Theater." Talks and workshops by nationally acclaimed writers Marilynne Robinson and Li-Young Lee. Festival sponsored in part by the Kansas Humanities Council.

For details contact the Milton Center, 316-942-4291, ext. 226 or 327; <miltonc@newmanu.edu>.

- **Mount Joy Mennonite Church** seeks candidates to fill two or more positions which together will cover four areas of responsibility: ***youth, outreach, pastoral care and Christian education***. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options of part-time or full-time if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time.

Mail resumes, in confidence, to Allen Heinly, 929 Wood St., Mount Joy, PA 17552; or contact Joe Sherer, 717-653-1528, email <joesherer@paonline.com>.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, with about 415 students K-8, has an employment opportunity beginning as soon as possible for an ***administrative assistant*** with interpersonal, organizational and computer skills to work in a three-person office.

Send or fax resume to Dave Helmus, Principal, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; 717-394-7107; fax 717-394-4944.

- **Camp Keola**, Huntington Lake, Calif., has ***summer jobs and service opportunities*** from June through Labor Day in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. We need head cook, maintenance, counselors, lifeguards and other positions. <www.campkeola.org> or call 559-439-7880.

- **Interested in serving God** and using your leadership and management skills and abilities in church relations in a new location? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for country representatives to serve in ***Tanzania, Congo and Ethiopia***, starting summer 2001. Application review begins immediately.

Contact Charmayne Brubaker for copies of these job descriptions, 717-859-1151; email <cdb@mcc.org>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., seeks qualified staff that have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting:

Alumni relations coordinator: Cultivate relationships with alumni through campus events and alumni projects; support broader advancement activities and events for all constituents. Excellent organizational, communication and public relations skills are required (full-time).

Communications coordinator: Coordinate all forms of communication including publications, advertising and external media. Excellent written communication skills with a strong interest in marketing and public relations are required (part-time).

Contact Darrel White, 503-363-2000 or <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Goshen College** seeks an ***associate campus minister*** to provide leadership to the CALL Project, a five-year Lilly Foundation-funded program. This half-time three-year appointment begins July 1, 2001. The CALL Project is intended to assist young people in understanding and embracing the call to Christian vocation, identify gifted students and provide them with ministry leadership experiences, and create opportunities for informed dialogue with the wider Mennonite Church about nurturing future church leaders. A master's degree in theology or divinity is preferred; B.A. required. Commitment to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education are essential. Proficiency in both English and Spanish preferred. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Please send a letter of application, resume and three letters of reference to Carlos Romero, Vice President for Student Life, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7543; fax 219-535-7660; email <carlosr@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "Employment." Applications will be received until March 1, 2001, or until the position is filled.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***professor of economics***. Teaching responsibilities are in the areas of principles of economics, intermediate economic theory, international economics and business, money and the economy. Position, full-time, tenure-track, is available at junior and senior levels; salary and rank commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Ph.D. degree in economics is strongly preferred (outstanding A.B.D.s will be considered). Candidates must demonstrate a strong commitment to excellence in teaching and liberal arts education; candidate must also be committed to supporting strong professional business programs in the department. Successful collegiate teaching experience and knowledge of and facility with appropriate instructional technologies are strongly preferred. The successful candidate will be expected to work collaboratively with students and faculty. Responsibilities begin in August 2001. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are also expected to share a commitment to this mission. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

Please send a letter of application, resume and three professional or business letters of reference to Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Moving?

Call us at 800-790-2498 or email <theMennonite@ mph.org>.

by Gordon Houser

An old news guideline is that one local death gets more column inches than 100 deaths in a developing country. Before you sniff at the injustice of that, let me ask you this: When was the last time you actually read an article about AIDS in Africa?

In an article in *Columbia Journalism Review* (November/December 2000) adapted from a speech she gave last summer in South Africa, medical and science writer Laurie Garrett compares what is going on today in Africa to the great plagues of the past. While few details are available about those plagues, she says, "we know that between 1346 and 1351 Yersinia pestis claimed a quarter to a third of the population of Europe and Central Asia."

From Barbara Tuchman's *A Distant Mirror* we learn that societies were so overwhelmed by the impact of plague that "entire cultures were obliterated or turned upside down."

Today's plague, AIDS, which Richard Holbrooke, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, calls "the number one issue in the world today," is happening before our eyes, yet we don't see it. We won't look.

Garrett appeals to journalists to ask government officials: "What is the strategy? How can we slow this plague in the absence of a vaccine or cure?"

She quotes Nelson Mandela: "AIDS today in Africa is claiming more lives than the sum total of all wars, famines and floods and the ravages of such deadly diseases as malaria."

Holbrooke says AIDS has the "potential to destroy economic achievement, undermine social stability and create more political uncertainty." And it cannot be contained on one continent. "It's the worst health crisis in at least six, seven centuries," he says. "And it isn't only a health crisis." He, too, calls on the media to keep paying attention, because the media are "the key to breaking through on this issue."

According to World Council of Churches (WCC) administrator Sonia P. Omulepu in *Ecumenical Courier* (December 2000), 25.3 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are living with HIV/AIDS, and 2.4 million people in Africa died of AIDS last year.

Various churches, as well as Mennonite mission workers, are working at this problem, but a broader response is needed. Peter Piot, executive director of United Nations AIDS, says, "Every church, every village, every association needs to be involved in this pandemic because every church and every village has been touched by it."

Omulepu writes that the AIDS crisis is a symptom of "systemic economic problems." For example, for every U.S. dollar spent on health care in Zambia, $4 are spent on reducing international debt.

The WCC has said, "The church's response to the challenge of HIV/AIDS comes from its deepest theological conviction about the nature of creation, the unshakable fidelity of God's love, the nature of the body of Christ and the reality of Christian hope."

As followers of Jesus, we must recognize that this is not just "their" problem; it is our problem. We are called to show compassion to our brothers and sisters in Africa and elsewhere around the world.

Next time you see an article on AIDS in Africa, read it, then pray about how God might be calling you to respond.

The best of 2000

Here, in alphabetical order, are the top five books I read and films I saw in the last year. I limited the films to 2000 releases that came to a theater or video store nearby.—*gh*

Books

- *Desire of the Everlasting Hills* by Thomas Cahill
- *For the Time Being* by Annie Dillard
- *The Holy Longing* by Ronald Rolheiser
- *Lying Awake: A Novel* by Mark Salzman
- *Plowing the Dark: A Novel* by Richard Powers

Films

- *Billy Elliot*
- *The Color of Paradise*
- *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*
- *East-West*
- *Traffic*

Sophia, a magazine for and by Christian women, invites submissions to its third New Writers Contest. Cash prizes will be awarded. Deadline is Feb. 15. For more information write *Sophia*, P.O. Box 28062, RPO N. Kildonan, Winnipeg, MB, R2G 4E9, fax 204-668-2527, email <lmatties@escape.ca>.

videos

My Dog Skip (PG) is an excellent family film. Based on a true story by writer Willi Morris, it shows the power of friendship while making incisive comments on racism and war.

films

All the Pretty Horses (PG-13), based on the award-winning novel by Cormac McCarthy, is a coming-of-age story set in the late 1940s. Two young cowboys ride into Mexico and find work at a horse ranch. They also find trouble. John Grady Cole (Matt Damon) tries to live out codes of goodness and honor against powerful forces, as well as against our culture's tendencies.

Cast Away (PG-13) is also about contrasts. A compulsive, workaholic (Tom Hanks) survives the crash of a FedEx plane in the South Pacific and finds himself alone on a small island. The change from our hectic, materialistic life to one of survival affects the character and the audience. Director Robert Zemeckis departs from standard Hollywood fare and for the most part succeeds. The film reminds us of humanity's basic needs for community, art and religion.

Traffic (R), one of the year's best films, is a hard-hitting look at the drug trade, particularly across the U.S.-Mexico border. Director Steven Soderbergh has crafted an artistic, intelligent film that portrays brutal realities yet offers a taste of hope at the end.

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Rich Preheim

Compassion, inspiration and 'conventional' Super Bowl wisdom

A few miscellaneous observations from looking through a glass darkly …

- This is probably not what George W. Bush had in mind when he ran for the White House championing "compassionate conservativism." But Linda Chavez, the new president's first nominee for Secretary of Labor, refreshingly underscored the "compassionate" part, regardless of political concerns.

On Jan. 9, Chavez withdrew her name from consideration to lead the Labor Department after it was revealed that in the early 1990s she allowed an illegal immigrant from Guatemala to live in her home and gave her spending money. Chavez said the woman was "being battered."

The incident highlights tensions between the requirements of this world and those of God's realm. Politically, the Chavez nomination was the Bush administration's first misstep. "The labor secretary ought to set the example to be able to enforce all of the laws," said Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle.

But Chavez had no apologies, even though her compassion scuttled her chance to be a Cabinet member. "I would do it again," she said, "even if it means I can't be secretary of labor."

For all people of conscience, that's an example from the highest echelons of political power.

Winning should not include humiliating an opponent for the sake of obscene personal glory, particularly by a school ostensibly proclaiming Christ's victory over sin and death.

- Linda Chavez espoused compassion. That's apparently an attribute not found on the boy's basketball team from Heritage Christian Academy in Cleveland, Texas. Heritage routed Banff Christian School 178-28 on Jan. 18, as Cedric Hensley scored 101 of his team's points. He came back into the game with three minutes left to score his final 17 points and become the 14th high school boys' basketball player in the country to crack the century mark for points scored in a game.

In competitive athletics, of course, winning is the goal of the game. But winning should not include humiliating an opponent for the sake of obscene personal glory, particularly by a school ostensibly proclaiming Christ's victory over sin and death.

- Inspiration can be found in unexpected arenas of society, such as secular rock-music radio stations. While some mainstream artists have used their music to promote good, their work has often been negated by other popular performers' lyrics and lifestyles that run in stark contrast to Christian values.

But the most recent list of 100 best-selling albums as reported by industry magazine *Billboard* is peppered with entries suggesting that mainstream pop and rock is not entirely a cesspool. "Human Clay" by Creed is *Billboard*'s sixth-ranked album, while U2's "All That You Can't Leave Behind" is 16th and "WOW 2001," a compilation of Christian contemporary songs, is 85th.

Creed, a newcomer to the rock scene, and longtime group U2 are not Christian artists. Rather they are mainstream rock groups whose members are Christian (except for U2's bassist, who has refused to publicly comment on his religious beliefs) and whose songs often touch on issues of religiosity. Creed's songs are filled with biblical imagery, while U2's lyrics have included Psalm 41 and Isaiah 40.

Not currently on *Billboard*'s list are groups such as Jars of Clay, P.O.D. and Sixpence None the Richer, explicitly Christian groups that have recently or are now enjoying success in the mainstream.

- The Tennessee Titans can take solace in the old cry of "Wait 'til next year." The Titans, the National Football League team in Nashville, did not play in the Super Bowl on Jan. 28, having lost to Baltimore in the playoffs two weeks earlier. But the last time a city hosted a convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church—St. Louis in 1999—that city's team won the next Super Bowl, as the Rams did in 2000. Since Nashville will be the site of this summer's joint convention, history indicates that the Titans would be destined for the Super Bowl championship in 2002. As for previous sites of GC-MC conventions, Bethlehem, Pa.; Urbana, Ill.; and Wichita, Kan., did not have NFL teams.—*rp*

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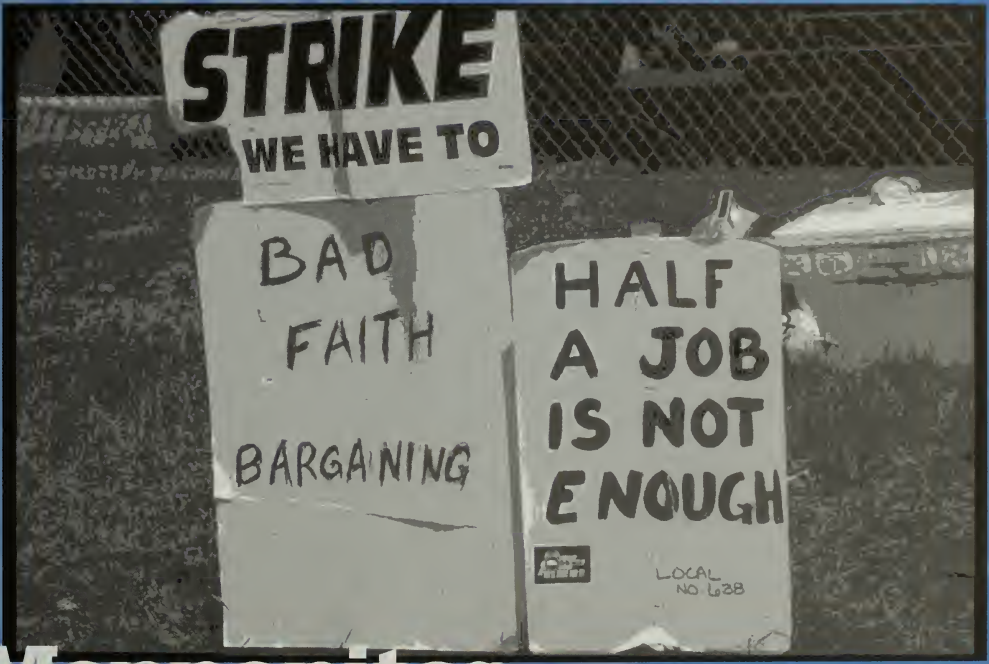
February 6, 2001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16 Be grateful and be aware

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Return to morality

I affirm Eve MacMaster's emphasis in her article "Dream of Peace" in the Jan. 16 issue that true peace comes only as our old bear and lion natures are changed through repentance and faith. Proverbs 14:34 says, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

The supreme tragedy of our time is that people having prominent roles in religion, government and society have tried to exercise moral leadership seemingly with little morality of their own.

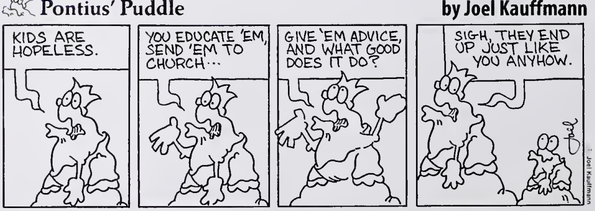
While many in the church call for a return to Scripture, I call for a proper use of Scripture. For we can be like King Herod in Matthew 2, who sought answers in Scripture to consolidate his own power and authority over people. We can be like Satan in Matthew 4, who used Scripture in an effort to control and manipulate others into his camp. Or we can be like the Magi in Matthew 2 who used Scripture to lead them to worship and follow Christ.

In John 5:39-40, Jesus said: "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

The supreme challenge of our time is to return to a personal true morality through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ so that we can exercise moral leadership in solving the problems among us and ahead of us and so that God will turn his face toward us and bless us. Without God's blessing we fail.—*John F. Murray, Kouts, Ind.*

Environmental guilt

I was impressed by "The Big Power of Little Things" by Joe Blowers (Speaking Out, Jan. 9). Respect for and protection of the environment has been a concern of mine for years, but I find it difficult to communicate this concern in a manner that motivates even members of my own community. I like Blowers' concise and practical suggestions for making a difference. When will we in North America begin to feel the guilt we deserve for all the unnecessary ways we indulge ourselves while depriving not only our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world but likely also future generations here?—*Anette Eisenbeis, Marion, S.D.*


Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann

KIDS ARE HOPELESS.
YOU EDUCATE 'EM, SEND 'EM TO CHURCH···
GIVE 'EM ADVICE, AND WHAT GOOD DOES IT DO?
SIGH, THEY END UP JUST LIKE YOU ANYHOW.
Joel
© Joel Kauffmann

Coloring in the spaces

Re "Fake Latinos" by Tobin Miller Shearer (Jan. 9): It is well and good and laudable to call for diversity and the end of racism, but apparently articles that seek to make these points need not meet minimal standards of common sense, logic or even racial judgments. If I follow Shearer's line of thought, white people sometimes take on the mannerisms, dress and speech of other ethnic groups. This means white people have some gaping hole in their souls and is evidence that they have lost their connection to "history, culture and a people." White people would be best served to "throw off our confusion and act as co-strugglers with people of color, never needing to steal their culture and identity to feel strong, able, unique."

The problem here is the treatment of all white people as a homogenous, like-thinking, like-deluded group. There should be equal shame in indicting any group when the group is defined by something like skin color. The additional step of assuming that a behavior follows from being a certain-colored person is ludicrous. I assume *The Mennonite* would not have printed an article wherein the thesis was "All black people are criminals," "All Asian people love rice" or, "All Northerners are elitist."

The fact is, there is enormous diversity within the group of people we call white. We white people didn't all come from the same place or the same background, and even if some of us did, that is no guarantee that we all act and think in the same way.

Are white Mennonites trying to fill the empty spaces in themselves by singing the Asian and African songs in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* or trying to find new ways to worship God? Which one of those things are black Mennonites doing when they sing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"?

I find it very difficult to believe that Shearer really thinks being white is the same as being without a culture. The converse assertion—that people with skin of any other color know their roots, history and culture—is equally dubious. And certainly, it is hard for people to understand the circumstances that resulted in the other people they see around them if they

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Vol. 4, No. 5, February 6, 2001

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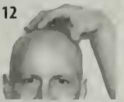
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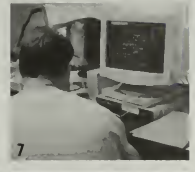
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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

have little or nothing in common. But that conditional is only true if we choose not to consider the facts that we are all human beings, that we all grew up and saw the world as it was around us, that we all have struggled with our place in that world, that we all have mothers and fathers and that we are all children of an eternal God.—*Jeremy Nafziger, Broad Run, Va.*

Tobin Miller Shearer responds: Responses to "Fake Latinos" caused me to ponder once more the way racism shapes identity. I realize that such a brief essay left significant assumptions unstated. The article assumes foremost a deep love for the Mennonite church. Equally deep is a conviction that, from its inception, U.S. society has given white people power and privilege and has oppressed people of color. Within the Christian church as a whole and the Mennonite church in particular, that same pattern continues. The complex web of socialization, segregation and belief has indelibly shaped our identities as white people and people of color.

These latter assumptions are not held in common by all who read the article. The breadth of response seems, however, to call us all deeper into consideration of how racism gives privilege to those of us with white skin and, in so doing, shapes our identities in profoundly disturbing ways. Far from limited to returning missionaries, this discussion also impacts how we do education in our schools, structure our worship services, shape expectations about mission (whether short- or long-term), how we talk to our children about who they are.

I do not expect that we will soon be in agreement about how racism shapes identity as white people or people of color. I do pray that we might at least begin the discussion.

Cover photo by CLEO Photography

Mennonites and unions

While surveys show that many Mennonites support the idea of labor organizations, the reality is harder to take for those who own businesses.

by Wally Kroeker

If you want to bring a furrow to a Mennonite businessperson's brow, say the word "union." While surveys show that many Mennonites support the idea of labor organizations, the reality is harder to take for those who own businesses. The attitude seems to be that although unions may have had their place in a bygone era to curb abuses by profiteers, their usefulness has faded.

Mennonite church groups have wrestled in the past with how their members should relate to unions. The Mennonite Brethren Church decided in 1969 not to forbid union membership but counseled its members "to join no union which demands primary allegiance from its members over all other commitments."

The Mennonite Encyclopedia (Volume 5) says this about the "great dilemma" union membership presents to Mennonites: "On the one hand, the labor union efforts to counteract the dehumanizing and exploitative aspects of certain kinds of industrial production are seen by some as compatible with the Anabaptist ethic. … On the other hand, Mennonites could not endorse the inherent reliance on coercion."

Some 17 percent of workers are unionized in the United States. There's a perception that union activity is rising. According to a survey by a Philadelphia law firm, 200 nonunion companies in the United States predict an increase in union-organizing activities.

In the past two years a growing number of Mennonite-owned firms have been eyed by unions. One large firm has been targeted—unsuccessfully—every year for four years, each time by a different union. The owner sees the issue as a straightforward money grab by union officials. It's not hard to figure, he says. You multiply the $40 monthly union fees by several thousand employees, and that's a big monthly boost to the union's bottom line.

Most businesspeople I contacted became emotional when discussing unions. Some became agitated. Criticisms ranged from the coercive (even violent) tactics employed by some unions to complaints of alleged union featherbedding and other means employed to obstruct "progress."

One successful entrepreneur who sees employment creation as part of his social contribution as a Christian in business says his view of expanding employment would change if he were required to work in the antagonistic environment that often comes with unionization.

Only a scant few businesspeople had favorable things to say about unions. (One of them is featured in the sidebar at left.)

Wally Kroeker is editor of The Marketplace, *where this article appeared (July-August 2000).*

'We think it was a good move'

When it comes to business and unions, Sam Nance may be an oddity. He deliberately chose to sign a union contract.

"It was a good business decision," he says, adding that "we had never been anti-union, we had just been nonunion."

MEDA photo

Very happy: Sam Nance

Sam's Dallas-based company, Samarco Inc., provides theatrical services (lighting, staging, sound) for business meetings and other gatherings such as large Mennonite assemblies. He employs seven people full-time and a dozen part-time.

When he signed up with the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees, he solved an ongoing problem of getting reliable help.

Previously when he booked labor from the freelance pool, he'd have to make 20 or more phone calls to get a crew of five. Some of them might come without tools or show up late.

"With the union we get qualified employees who are there slightly early with the proper tools," he says. " And we get that with one call."

Sam had already been paying close to union scale. And since the union's overhead was lower than his, it was cost-effective to hire employees through a contract labor organization that the union set up, which looked after insurance, red tape, pension and vacation benefits.

"We're very happy with the arrangement," says Sam. "We think it was a good move."—*Wally Kroeker*

Labor unions: a practical testing ground

"On balance, Mennonites have had major difficulty successfully relating the peace position to their interaction with labor unions. In the years ahead, ethical issues dealing with labor unions will be one of the most important practical testing grounds of Christians committed to the way of peace and reconciliation."—*Mennonite Encyclopedia (Volume 5), entry on "Labor Unions"*

A Mennonite view of labor relations

A summary of a report more than 20 years ago from a forerunner to Mennonite Economic Development Associates

More than 20 years ago, Mennonite Industry and Business Associates (MIBA), one of the forerunners of today's Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), undertook a major study of business and labor. Its Report on Management-Labor Relations, which was unanimously endorsed by the MIBA convention at the time and published in the March 1980 issue of *The Marketplace*, was later described by the Mennonite Encyclopedia (Volume 5) as "arguably the best Mennonite treatment of the subject."

Following is a condensed summary of the report's outline of biblical principles regarding relations between management and labor and their possible applications:

Justice: The Bible calls for justice in all human relationships. People in positions of dependency or subordination are to receive fair and considerate treatment because of their dependent position. Justice is to be given because it is commanded, not because people deserve it or have earned it; it is not a contingency based on performance or power. Justice is due everyone, whether in equal, superior or subordinate positions.

Love: The biblical ethic of love calls for service rather than exploitation and domination. This means we are to share and give rather than take or deprive. We are to serve and help others rather than expect them to serve us. It means development of others rather than using others for our own enhancement or advantage.

A biblical view of service transcends class consciousness and stratification. It implies that we see others as equals, not as inferiors, antagonists or unworthy of being included in the social community.

Honesty and integrity: Employers and employees need to operate with honesty and openness in communication and exchange with no deception, misinformation, misleading intentions, misrepresentation or stealing, which can include such things as unfair wages and withholding advancement. All agreements, understandings and contracts must be meticulously fulfilled, whether on paper, verbal or implied.

Peaceful resolution of differences: The Bible calls us all, including employers and employees, to pursue peace with everyone, be ministers of reconciliation and go the second mile in interpersonal demands. Using violence in any form (including psychological or social) for settling differences is contrary to Scripture, whether perpetrated by labor or management. The welfare of others is to take precedence over one's own. Acting only as an agent for a company or institution and thereby escaping personal responsibility for one's acts is foreign to the Bible.

Reverence for work: The Bible teaches the importance of work, which is a part of creation that allows us to lead a fuller life, help others and please God. Christians can and should be involved in productive, meaningful work. This includes producing useful products and services. Work is a means of serving God and fellow humans and must be seen as part of life in the kingdom of God. Professional and power distinctions in work should be eliminated as much as possible, and monetary remuneration for significance of contribution to work efforts should be carefully evaluated.

Professional and power distinctions in work should be eliminated as much as possible, and monetary remuneration for significance of contribution to work efforts should be carefully evaluated.

Reverence for personhood: Scripture recognizes the distinctiveness of each person's gifts and assumes also the importance of respecting the different abilities of each person. Thus employees should be given the opportunity to develop their individual abilities and gifts. Both employees and the organization should be able to benefit from each person's contribution.

The following guidelines can be used as a basis for discussing and applying biblical principles:

- Primary allegiance is to God, not to management, union or profession.
- Christian employers and employees are

continued on page 6

A Mennonite view of labor relations

continued from page 5

stewards of God's "good and perfect gifts." Exploitation of labor, management or resources has no place in Christian stewardship, since we are not our own but the Lord's.

- In God's sight all people are created with equal worth, yet each person is unique. Employers are no better than employees and vice versa.
- Coercion, violence, militancy, threats or misrepresentation cannot be used to gain results by Christian employers and employees.
- Christian employees should make their work a source of personal fulfillment and their personal contribution to society.
- Christian employers should guard against a wide disparity in their lifestyle when compared with their employees.
- Christian employers and employees should strive to communicate openly and honestly with each other and with non-Christians, concerning their motives, objectives and policies on the job.
- Honesty and integrity must be practiced at all times.
- Employer-employee relationships should be motivated to work toward common goals and purposes.
- Power should never be used to dominate others.
- Christian employers and employees must cooperate to provide the highest quality consumer products and services at the most economical rate.

The report concluded by suggesting several ways to enhance communication and relationships in a business. Among them: employee-management discussion councils, profit sharing, industrial chaplaincy, employee stock ownership plans and employee representation on the board of directors.

This article originally appeared in The Marketplace *(July-August 2000).*

Christian employers and employees should strive to communicate openly and honestly with each other and with non-Christians, concerning their motives, objectives and policies on the job.

How busines

Some skills routinely used in the marketplace are just what churches need to be healthy and effective.

by James M. Harder

For how many people does the term "businessperson" still only mean "deep pockets"—a potential funding source for church activities?

Now that the artificial divide between the work of the church and the world of work continues to recede, businesspeople are finding more and varied ways to contribute their talents and nonmonetary gifts.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul reminds us that all parts of the body are important because none can function alone. Similarly the church includes a rich mix of talents and gifts within its membership. The business perspective is but one of them. By itself, the business approach is insufficient. But without it playing its unique role with other gifts, the church will likely struggle.

With that caveat, here are four areas of expertise that business professionals can bring to the task of building more effective and healthy churches:

1. Embrace change: The business environment is one of almost routine change driven by a competitive marketplace. Adapting to new technologies, demographic trends, markets, mergers—this is the reality of business.

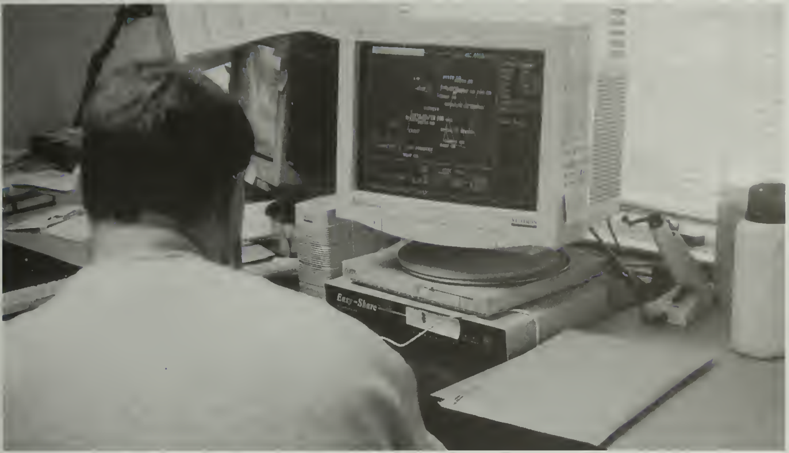
While change is not to be embraced uncritically, the business professional has learned to live with change and knows the following things:

- Change brings new opportunities that can offset the negatives.
- The need for change must be faced—denial can spell the end of the enterprise.
- The focus of change should be more about reshaping, creating and improving than about stopping, cutting or getting rid of the past.
- There are models and processes that facilitate change and make it more satisfactory in the end.

Businesspeople, agents of change in their professional lives, can transfer their skills to facilitate change in their church environments as well. Change need not be as negative or painful as it often is for churches.

2. Clarify responsibility: Most people have experienced a situation where frustration resulted because responsibility for action was

an help the church



Debra Turnrose

not clearly specified. In business, of course, that is a well-known recipe for disaster. Nothing gets done. Organizations languish.

How can practices common in the business world improve this situation in church settings?

- Help name the issues that need attention—not critically but for their clarification as a prerequisite to their remediation.
- Insist on basic clarity of communication in church reports and minutes—be as specific as possible about who, what and when.
- Help others understand the need to delegate authority and responsibility to individuals or groups to deal with issues—in tandem with adequate accountability to the larger group.
- Serve as an advocate for church staff or volunteers who suffer the burden of too many bosses. Help clarify their organizational accountabilities and job descriptions.

3. Set priorities: Establishing clear priorities can be especially challenging in church settings. This is largely due to the desire to do everything because everything is important.

Yet the business professional understands the following realities and can help others in the church come to terms with them:

- Because resources of time and money are always limited, every action has an "opportunity cost." If we decide to put more of our energies in one activity, it will inevitably reduce our effort somewhere else unless additional resources are forthcoming.
- It is essential to set priorities, even in church settings, and to achieve the most critical things first.
- Sometimes the highest priorities take little time or money to accomplish—size of budget does not always determine importance.

4. Evaluate effectiveness: Every successful businessperson must pay close attention to the bottom line as a measure of effectiveness. Ethical businesses will include qualities beyond financial profit in their bottom-line calculations, making the job more complex.

Yet even that challenge seems straightforward compared with the task of determining effectiveness of church activities—where long-term spiritual transformation and growth are the true bottom lines and God's hand is also at work.

The experienced business professional is equipped to help the church realize these benefits of a culture of evaluation:

- Regular evaluation of church staff, program and congregational life itself is a stewardship activity—it leads to better use of resources in the long run.
- Evaluation exercises force discussion of performance objectives and indicators of success. That discussion is a positive outcome in its own right.
- Evaluation that goes beyond simple affirmation of efforts is essential for developmental improvement to occur. Clear identification of areas for improvement, if done in the spirit of concern and helpfulness, is consistent with the ethic of building a stronger church community.

Establishing clear priorities can be especially challenging in church settings. This is largely due to the desire to do everything because everything is important.

James M. Harder is associate professor of economics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and a member of Shalom Mennonite Church in Newton.

'No' vote on merger is OK, top board says

PHOENIX—The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board is ready to create a new denomination at this summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn. But are the delegates?

"That's for the delegates to say," says Jim Harder.

And the delegates need to feel free to say no, say Harder and his fellow Executive Board members. Meeting in Phoenix Jan. 26-28, they discussed the expected crucial vote to complete the formation of Mennonite Church USA out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

> **We want people to move at the pace they feel comfortable.**
>
> *—Duane Oswald*

"We want people to move at the pace they feel comfortable," said board member Duane Oswald. "We don't want people to feel rushed.

"Are we willing to let the peace of Christ take over and guide our decisions … and not worry about what the outcome is?"

There are three potential outcomes from Nashville, said Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director-designate: final approval of the merger, reversal of the process by retracting actions of past delegate assemblies or slowing the process.

If delegates choose to slow the process, the U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church will continue to exist under a single Executive Board, as is now the case, until the next delegate assembly. "That's not an implausible scenario," Schrag said.

Harder called the Nashville vote "more about timing of the next step than whether there will be a next step."

At Nashville, the GC and MC delegate bodies will each spend time meeting separately but with the other delegate body observing. During joint meetings, GC and MC delegates will be intermingled around tables to encourage discussion, rather than have individuals parade to microphones to express their views.

"What we need is some sense that this is a communal process for delegates," said moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman.

The board approved a number of denominational organizational proposals, which will be sent to the delegates at Nashville. Among them was a plan for a new mission agency with an "organic" emphasis. The proposal calls for programs to be placed with congregations, area conferences, natural structures and associations of congregations or other groups.

"Our impetus in this process is what do congregations need us to look like," said Stanley Green, president of Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

The proposal also emphasizes a "missional church" theology, that everything the church does should proclaim the reign of God. "Evangelism is missional; worship is missional, education is missional; calling out leaders is missional," said Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

The new agency will replace MBM, CHM and the Commission on Overseas Mission. It will also involve Lancaster Conference's Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Conference's Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. "They are still discerning what that level of involvement will be," said COM executive secretary Ron Flaming.

Also during the meeting, Duane Oswald, a member of the board's executive committee, was announced as moderator-elect for the biennium following Nashville. Current MC associate general secretary Ron Byler was announced as associate executive director-designate for the new denomination.—*Rich Preheim*

Finances delay publishing merger

PHOENIX—Citing concerns about Mennonite Publishing House's finances, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board has delayed finalizing the formation of a new merged publishing and bookstore enterprise.

Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press (FLP) were expected to form a new entity effective Feb. 1. But the board, meeting in closed session on Jan. 27, put off approving the plan until its April meeting due to "potential financial commitments from former MPH operations," according to a board statement.

MPH and FLP can still implement new management structures and a single board. But the Executive Board decided General Conference Mennonite Church publishing assets will not be transferred to the new entity until the financial concerns are addressed.

While the board action did not list any specific concerns, a synopsis of the merger plan showed that as of Jan. 30, 2000, MPH had a debt of $3.7 million, compared with $610,000 for FLP. Furthermore, a group of retirees is challenging MPH's recent decision to cut their supplemental medical insurance.

Board member Jim Harder called the board's decision good business practice. "You don't blend businesses until the ground rules are examined," he said.

A team of board members and staff will work with the new publishing board and management to resolve the issues.—*Rich Preheim*

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- In February 2000, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities awarded Goshen College its "Racial Harmony" award for its commitment to confronting racism, first on our campus and then in the world. The Indiana Civil Rights Commission recognizes GC for "Best Practices in Celebrating Diversity."

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- Goshen College and President Shirley H. Showalter received one of five 1999 Knight Foundation Presidential Leadership Award grants for $150,000 to be used toward long-term institutional benefits. Schools previously receiving the award include Smith College, Swarthmore College, Berea College, Carleton College, Oberlin College, Bennington College, Macalester College and Reed College. In recommending GC for the grant, the selection committee stated:

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book by Erlene Wilson, Goshen was named of the *100 Best Colleges for African-erican Students.*

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Dorothy Cotton, Civil Rights activist
David Dabydeen, West Indian author
Lt. Col. David Grossman, author
Donald Hall, poet
Ken Hiebert, graphic design artist and author
Garrison Keillor, humorist
Yolanda King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr.
Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, theologian and musician
Barbara Kopple, filmmaker
Alex Kotlowitz, journalist and author
Madeleine L'Engle, author
Mary Ellen Mark, documentary photographer
William Pannel, Fuller Theological Seminary
Ramlil Parikh, Gandhian scholar
Sister Helen Prejean, death penalty activist
Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Harvard School of Public Health dean
Peter Rausch, former University of Notre Dame and Chicago Bears football player
Keith Reinhard, DDB Needham Worldwide Inc.
Robert Siegal, National Public Radio
Hollis Sigler, painter-printmaker
Ray Suarez, NPR and "Lehrer Newshour"
Steve Kreider Yoder, *Wall Street Journal*
Jim Wallis, *Sojourners* editor-in-chief

Guest performers include: Anonymous 4; Baltimore Consort; BeauSoleil; Chris Brubeck; Tom Chapin/John McCutcheon; Chesapeake; Franz Jackson; Phil Keaggy; Patty Larkin; Carrie Newcomer; Rhythm and Brass; Shenandoah Shakespeare Express; Sweet Honey in the Rock; Toledo Symphony

GOSHEN COLL

MCC starts India quake aid with food

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing $330,000 as an initial response to the devastating earthquake that hit Gujarat State in western India on Jan. 27.

The aid includes $30,000 in emergency food aid that has already been forwarded and will be distributed by MCC's longtime partner in India, CASA, the relief and development agency of the Indian Council of Churches. MCC will provide an additional $300,000 in food aid with the help of the church-based Canadian Foodgrains Bank. This food will be available for food-for-work projects during clean-up and reconstruction, mostly in rural areas. All of the food will be purchased locally in India.

"This isn't all MCC will do," says Ed Martin, MCC's director of Central/South Asia programs.

MCC expects further requests that will include the need for additional funding and resources.

While MCC has an office and workers in Calcutta in eastern India, the earthquake hit an area in western India where MCC does not have workers. But it is an area where Ten Thousand Villages, a program of MCC, purchases products from local artisan groups, including St. Mary's, a Catholic organization in Ahmedabad, one of the hardest hit cities.

"We are trying to make contact with them and are hoping they have survived," says Naomi Beach, a Ten Thousand Villages buyer.

Women from St. Mary's hand embroider tablecloths, pillow covers, Christmas stockings and wall hangings. Tiny mirrors are often incorporated into their detailed work.—*MCC News Service*

This isn't all MCC will do.

—Ed Martin

MCC sends emergency assistance, plans to rebuild houses following Salvadoran earthquake disaster

AKRON, Pa.—In a two-phase response to the Jan. 13 earthquake that left more than 10 percent of El Salvador's 6.2 million people homeless, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is sending emergency relief to meet short-term needs while planning to rebuild 200 to 300 houses over the next year in a longer-term project.

MCC is committing $25,000 for locally purchased food, clean water and plastic covering for quake victims. MCC is distributing this aid through partner agencies, several of which work in the regions most affected by the quake.

MCC is coordinating its efforts with a coalition of other faith-based humanitarian agencies. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank has granted as much as $90,000 for food grains and oil to eight groups in the coalition. This money will provide food for 26,000 people for six weeks.

In conjunction with the Worship Center, an independent, non-Mennonite congregation in Leola, Pa., MCC is also organizing a shipment of material resources, including 320 relief kit buckets, 2,400 combination school/health kits, 3,000 comforters and 1,000 pounds of thermal underwear. All items are in stock at MCC's Material Resources Center in Ephrata, Pa.

The second phase of MCC's response—long-term housing reconstruction—will be more complicated and costly. "Land is scarce in El Salvador," says Daryl Yoder-Bontrager, MCC Latin America assistant director. "Many people were living in rented houses or did not have clear title to their land, making it difficult for relief agencies to be able to build new houses for them."

MCC photo by Jon Shellenberger

A woman holds a baby amid the rubble of the Salvadoran village of San Augistina. Ninety percent of the houses in the village were heavily damaged or destroyed by a Jan. 13 earthquake.

MCC hopes to raise enough money to build 200 to 300 houses, with costs estimated at $2,000 per house. MCC will invite teams from North America and other Central American countries to donate time and labor to the construction. The teams may be sent as early as April, depending on how quickly land issues can be resolved.

Lisa Hughes of Portland, Ore., a former MCC worker in El Salvador, will return to the country to coordinate the teams. David Martin of Clymer, N.Y., will help coordinate overall relief efforts in El Salvador for at least a month. He recently returned to the United States after coordinating post-Hurricane Mitch work in Honduras.—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

New State Department program brings five international students to EMU for peace studies

HARRISONBURG, Va.—A grant from a U.S. State Department pilot program has brought five international students to Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) to study peacebuilding.

The Harrisonburg school's graduate-level Conflict Transformation Program (CTP) has been awarded a Fulbright Conflict Resolution Grant, sponsored by the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The grant brought student-scholars from the Middle East and North Africa to campus to study principles of peacebuilding within and between communities.

The pilot program is designed to support course work and independent research. The program includes a summer practicum with an institution or nongovernmental organization committed to conflict resolution.

Four students have enrolled in two or three CTP courses for the second semester, which began last month. Each participant has a faculty adviser who will assist in course selection and serve as a resource in the student's field of interest.

The Fulbright students are:

- Jihan Al-Alaily, a radio reporter and producer for the British Broadcasting Corporation in Cairo, Egypt. She has covered Egyptian reactions to the Gulf War, student demonstrations in Baghdad, the plight of the Kurds in northern Iraq and the protracted war and famine in southern Sudan. She has an undergraduate degree in political science.
- Muzna Al-Masri, a regional children's program coordinator in Lebanon. She has worked with Quaker Peace and Services and as education coordinator for Save the Children Federation. Her undergraduate studies are in sociology and anthropology.
- Lina Haramy, a counselor and program assistant for the Big Brother-Big Sister Program of the Palestinian Counseling Center in Jerusalem. She holds a degree in psychology.
- Michal Reifen, currently studying conflict management and conflict resolution at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Her undergraduate studies are in psychology and communication.

Immediately following the spring semester, the group will take part in EMU's Summer Peacebuilding Institute, which runs May 7 - June 29 on campus. After this, the students will choose from several options for another six months of study.

A fifth student, Nabyl Eddahar, will participate only in the Summer Peacebuilding Institute. He is a professor of political science at Hassan II University in Casablanca, Morocco.—*Jim Bishop*

Summer session 3

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30-year mission veterans still building faith on spirituality of indigenous Argentinians

ELKHART, Ind.—Byrdalene and Willis Horst, mission workers in Argentina for nearly 30 years, do not fit the classic stereotypes of missionaries announcing truth to unreached people. Instead, they help indigenous Argentinians recover the memory of how God has worked in their past and share the new thing God has done in Jesus Christ.

"The gospel does not erase, suppress or supplant previous culture and spirituality, but rather enhances it, bringing possibilities for new life and hope," Willis says. "Jesus brings to completion their own native Old Testament in much the same way he fulfilled the best of the Jewish tradition and sacred memory, which we now call the Old Testament."

The Horsts, serving with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, are part of a team that includes Germans from the Evangelical Free Church tradition, North American Mennonites and Argentine Baptists.

The Horsts believe the indigenous church in Argentina's Chaco has words for the North American church: Don't bring us handouts. Come walk with us. Don't teach us your solutions. Read the Bible together with us. Learn together with us how we can help each other. All the Creator's gifts are meant to be shared. Stinginess is the worst sin of all. Accept each other as God accepts you. Be inclusive. Welcome the outsider. Don't judge others as unworthy. Have faith in Jesus. Jesus is the most powerful of all powers. Watch and wait. Jesus is coming.

"The indigenous believers have taught us that God is so much greater than we could ever have imagined without our experiences of being their guests for nearly 30 years," Willis says. "The Creator calls us all to listen anew to the voice of Jesus as he calls to us through the poor, the marginalized, the weak, the excluded and the oppressed, inviting us to follow him serving them. The way of the cross, of peace and justice, is the only way to overcome evil."

Byrdalene and Willis Horst

Byrdalene suggests that the North American church might benefit from a stronger focus on the stories of Jesus' birth, life and death, internalizing Scripture to the point where their poignancy spawns awe and weeping.

"One Toba church planned a dramatization [for Easter] and memorized the verses," Byrdalene says. "But when they began the practices, they were so moved by the story that the actors broke down crying and could not continue."—*Elizabeth Beachy for GCMC and MBM news services*

> **The indigenous believers have taught us that God is so much greater than we could ever have imagined.**
>
> *—Willis Horst*

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- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel *(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

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this date in Mennonite history

Feb. 6, 1941—President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Order 8675 establishing Civilian Public Service.

COM executive named to MCC position

AKRON, Pa.—Ron Flaming, executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission since 1998, will become Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) director of international programs when his COM responsibilities conclude in early 2002.

While at COM, he was Mission Transformation Team leader, which developed the proposal for the new denominational mission agency. Flaming will begin at MCC after the completion of the mission transformation project. He will succeed Edgar Metzler, who has been director of international programs since 1998.

Flaming previously served seven years with COM in India. Other experiences include dean of students at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; pastor of Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka, Kan.; and Western District Conference youth director. Flaming has a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and a master's degree in education from Indiana University, South Bend.—*MCC News Service*

Furniture collection recognized for preservation

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—The Mennonite furniture at Kauffman Museum, located on the Bethel College campus in North Newton, has been designated an official project of Save America's Treasures. The organization is a partnership between the White House Millennium Council and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The museum's furniture collection includes dowry chests, sleeping benches and wardrobes brought by Mennonite immigrants from Russia in the 1870s or built by their first-generation descendants.

Save America's Treasures identifies historic places, artifacts and documents needing immediate preservation, including "The Star-Spangled Banner" and Thomas Edison's invention factory in West Orange, N.J.

Jim Bishop

Baring one another's burdens

Wayne Sneary (left), a member of Community Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va., was recently diagnosed with a brain tumor and has lost his hair due to radiation and chemotherapy treatments. So as a symbol of solidarity, fellow congregational member Ken Roth appeared at church on Jan. 21 with a shaved head. "It's frustrating to know how to respond to Wayne in this difficult situation he's facing," Roth said. "I felt this is one visible way to show empathy."

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Births

Coblentz, Olivia Jane Chun-Li, Feb. 2, 2000, received for adoption Nov. 30, 2000, by Bert and Jodi (Miller) Coblentz, Goshen, Ind.

Cordell, Emma Catherine, Jan. 10, to Craig and Susan (Warner) Cordell, McConnellsburg, Pa.

Franz, Eva Justine, Jan. 1, to Pam (Brauer) and Scott Franz, Goshen, Ind.

Goertzen, Lauren Marie, Dec. 27, 2000, to Carla (Schultz) and Stuart Goertzen, Buhler, Kan.

Lovellette, Henry Allen Lewis, Dec. 21, 2000, to Brett and Marianne (Israel) Lovellette, Normal, Ill.

Martin, Aidan Frey, Nov. 1, 2000, to Joy and Roger Frey Martin, Santa Fe, N.M.

Martin, Matthew Stone, Dec. 26, 2000, to Jennifer (Bodick) and Rodney Martin, Bechtelsville, Pa.

Meyer, Ruby Miriam, Jan. 3, to Erika (Yoder) and Tom Meyer, Huntertown, Ind.

Miller, Jenna May, Dec. 23, 2000, to Janelle (Rodman) and Maynard Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Mumaw, Claire Hope, Dec. 21, 2000, to Eric and Kim (Maggert) Mumaw, Goshen, Ind.

Rempel, Gretta Marie, Dec. 30, 2000, to Kristen (Litwiller) and Randy Rempel, Iowa City, Iowa.

Shenk, Evelyn Frances, Dec. 4, 2000, to Cassandra (Graber) and Troy Shenk, Silver Plume, Colo.

Wansley, Hanna Ruth, Jan. 9, to Anita and Chris Wansley, Meridian, Miss.

Wheeler, Luke Gabriel, Jan. 12, to David and Jana (Goering) Wheeler, Osseo, Mich.

Wolfe, Landon David and Luke Matthew (twins), Dec. 29, 2000, to Cara (Plank) and Don Wolfe, West Liberty, Ohio.

Yoder, Alisha Nielle, Nov. 27, 2000, adoption pending in February by Sheldon and Tisha (Beeson) Yoder, Hutchinson, Kan.

Marriages

Alderfer/Hostetter: Chris Alderfer, Harleysville, Pa., and Jana Hostetter, Harleysville, Jan. 6 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Book/Lapp: Miriam Book, Harleysville, Pa., and James Lapp, Sellersville, Pa., Dec. 23, 2000, at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Campbell/Kauffman: Melinda Campbell, Orrville, Ohio, and Jared Kauffman, Orrville, Dec. 23, 2000, at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Chupp/Kratzer: Amy Chupp, Nappanee, Ind., and Amos Kratzer, Kidron, Ohio, Nov. 16, 2000, at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Grant/Stuckey: Karen Grant, Jamaica, and Ron Stuckey, Archbold, Ohio, Dec. 31, 2000.

Harris/Quintois: Sarah Harris, Harleysville, Pa., and Thomas Quintois, North Wales, Pa., Nov. 17, 2000, at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Heintz/White: Douglas Heintz, Kitchener, Ont., and Joanne White, London, Ont., Jan. 5 at London.

Kooker/Schlosser: Richard Kooker, Souderton, Pa., and Phyllis Schlosser, Harleysville, Pa., Dec. 30, 2000.

Krehbiel/Yoder: Daniel Krehbiel, Montezuma, Kan., and Dianna Yoder, Normal, Ill., Nov. 25, 2000, at Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Wyse/Zimmerman: Katrina Wyse, Archbold, Ohio, and Keith Zimmerman, Philadelphia, Dec. 30, 2000.

Deaths

Alderfer, Catherine Johnson, 77, Harleysville, Pa., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Abram Alderfer. Parents: Charles and Linda Johnson (deceased). Other survivors: children Clyde, Paul, Philip, David; three grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 6 at Upper Skippack Mennonite Church, Creamery, Pa.

Bartel, Allen, 84, Inman, Kan., died Dec. 24, 2000. Spouse: Selma Bartel. Other survivors: children LeWayne, Jane Johnson; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Beyeler, Martha Rohrer, 89, Orrville, Ohio, died Dec. 8, 2000. Spouse: Floyd Beyeler (deceased). Parents: David and Emma Smucker Rohrer (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Mae Hostetler, Irene Lepley, Janet Nussbaum; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Birky, Kate Miller, 96, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Albert Birky (deceased). Parents: Dan and Magdelena Egli Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Mishler, Marjorie Hooley, Joyce McCreary, Ivan, Vernon; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; one stepgrandchild; four stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

Bowers, Stella Beck, 95, West Unity, Ohio, died Jan. 4. Spouse: Lawrence Bowers (deceased). Parents: Menno and Mary Beck (deceased). Survivors: children Claudine Schmucker, Max; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Stryker, Ohio.

Brenneman, Salome Bechtel, 95, Stuarts Draft, Va., died Jan. 4. Spouse: Benjamin Brenneman (deceased). Parents: Francis and Sarah Kolb Bechtel (deceased). Survivors: children Esther Grove, Louise Tardy, Francis, David, Henry, Charles, James, Benjamin; 17 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 6 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Dester, Olga Voth, 79, Deer Creek, Okla., died Jan. 13. Spouse: Marvin Dester. Parents: Peter and Mary Schmidt Voth (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Reese, Leland, Larry; six grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Deer Creek Mennonite Church.

Diller, Lillian Pauline Jantz, 78, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Allen Diller. Parents: Solomon and Katie Wadel Jantz (deceased) Other survivors: children Jim, Vicki Hoffman; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral Jan. 17 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Egli, Viola, 89, Canby, Ore., died Jan. 5. Parents: Jacob and Ida Kauffman Egli. Funeral: Jan. 9 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Ehrisman, Edna, 98, Milford, Neb., died Jan. 1. Spouse: Ezra Ehrisman (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Sophie Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Leland, Robert, Berdean Miller; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Fry, Mary Detweiler, 94, West Liberty, Ohio, died Jan. 11. Spouse: Earl Fry (deceased). Parents: Edward and Elizabeth Haning Detweiler (deceased). Survivors: children Samuel, Philip, Stanley, Mary Joan Oglesbee; 16 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Gerber, Esther Baumgartner, 76, Kidron, Ohio, died Dec. 25, 2000. Spouse: Titus Gerber. Parents: Albert and Martha Baumgartner (deceased). Other survivors: children Jann Allison, Gerald, Glenn, Carol Kahrig; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Good, Olive, 96, Tavistock, Ont., died Jan. 7. Parents: Abraham and Barbara Shantz Good (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 10 at Wilmot Mennonite Church, New Hamburg, Ont.

Hartzler, Orpha Lehman, 92, Strasburg, Pa., died Jan. 4. Spouse: Melvin Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Sarah Moser Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Rebecca Rutt, James; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Hostetler, Mary West, 91, Canby, Ore., died Dec. 22, 2000. Spouse: Samuel Hostetler (deceased). Parents: Harry and Anna West (deceased). Survivors: children Samuel Jr., Stanley; 11 grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 7 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Keeler, Paul, 79, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 14. Parents: Henry and Florence Keeler (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 17 at Souderton Mennonite Homes Chapel.

Krahn, Hilda Wiebe, 90, North Newton, Kan., died Dec. 27, 2000. Spouse: Cornelius Krahn (deceased). Parents: Gerhard and Anna Claassen Wiebe (deceased). Survivors: children Marianne Miller, Karla Kuhn-Osius, Cornelia; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 31 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Kulp, John, 87, Telford, Pa., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Kathryn Heckler Kulp. Parents: Leidy and Salome Kulp (deceased). Other survivors: children John; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Lim, Sidone Khouhathong, 66, Kitchener, Ont., died Jan. 10. Spouse: Sipha Lim. Other survivors: children Khamsay Khouhathong, Somphone Hoang, Thiensoun, Pichu Ou; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 13 at Kitchener.

Longacre, Kathryn Hartline, 83, Bally, Pa., died Dec. 22, 2000. Spouse: Daniel Longacre. Other survivors: children Daniel, Newton, Timothy, Kathryn, Diane; six grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Bally Mennonite Meetinghouse.

Rosenberger, Ralph, 83, Quakertown, Pa., died Dec. 27, 2000, of leukemia. Spouse: Mildred Rosenberger. Parents: Allen and Ella Mood Rosenberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Alan, Sara Oberlander; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.

Schmidt, Matthew, infant, Lawrence, Kan., died Jan. 10 of kidney failure. Parents: Mark and Carla Schmidt. Funeral: Jan. 12.

Shifflett, Ethel, 83, Elkton, Va., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Elmer Lee Shifflett (deceased). Parents: John and Kate Lawson Davis (deceased). Survivors: children Floyd, Lois Bailey; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 21.

Wenger, Harry, 84, Wellman, Iowa, died Dec. 10, 2000, of cancer. Spouse: Mary White Wenger (deceased). Parents: Homer and Velma Cook Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children John, Don; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 15 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Global Gifts**, a Ten Thousand Villages partnership store in Indianapolis, seeks ***retail manager***. Salary and benefits negotiable. Please send resume to Dale Kephart, 8110 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46260.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is looking for a full-time ***youth pastor*** to work primarily with junior and senior youth.

  For more information or to apply, contact Youth Pastor Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-862-2595; fax 219-862-2178; email <ycmc@juno.com>.

- **Tel Hai Retirement Community**, Honey Brook, Pa., seeks a ***CEO***. Requirements include Christian commitment, endorsement of Mennonite values, 5 years senior leadership experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <info@mhsonline.org>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has one opening for ***single person*** for a one-year voluntary service assignment beginning May 1.

  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Edmonton, Alberta, is looking for a full-time ***pastor*** to commence Aug. 15, 2001. We are a multigenerational, urban congregation of 200+ members and adherents.

  For further information or to submit an application, please contact Adela Wedler, Chair, Pastoral Leadership Transition Committee, 1903 – 111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp** seeks ***executive director and program director***. BBC is a small Mennonite camp nestled in the Green Mountains of Plymouth, Vt. The camp has a mission focus with many outdoor and nature-oriented programs. These positions will be available August 2001.

  Please send a resume and letter of interest to Regina Beidler, P.O. Box 124, Randolph Center, VT 05061. Other questions and inquiries can be directed to <bbeidler@quest-net.com>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., seeks qualified staff that have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting:

  Alumni relations coordinator: Cultivate relationships with alumni through campus events and alumni projects; support broader advancement activities and events for all constituents. Excellent organizational, communication and public relations skills are required (full-time).

  Communications coordinator: Coordinate all forms of communication including publications, advertising and external media. Excellent written communication skills with a strong interest in marketing and public relations are required (part-time).

  Contact Darrel White, 503-363-2000 or <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

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- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a five-week ***teaching program in China*** this summer. One week of orientation and sightseeing in Beijing is included. Teaching experience is not required. For more information contact CEE, 1521 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; <ChinaEdEx@aol.com>; web <www.chinaeducationalexchange.org>.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

  Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Middlebury, Ind., invites applicants for full-time position as ***youth minister*** and two half-time positions in ***pastoral care and outreach ministry***. There is flexibility in the two half-time positions, which may be combined into one full-time position if the applicant possesses appropriate gifts to perform both roles. Please indicate your area of interest when applying. All positions are available immediately.

  Mail letters of interest and resume to Search Committee, First Mennonite Church, 203 E. Lawrence St., P.O. Box 508, Middlebury, IN 46540; or contact Linford Martin at 219-825-5135.

- **Mennonite.net**, a leading web site and application service provider to the Mennonite churches of North America, is seeking a full-time ***creative director and webmaster***. This is a highly visible role in our organization, with ultimate responsibility for our "end product." The ideal candidate will bring experience in developing web sites, including a strong familiarity with graphic design and writing.

  To apply, submit a letter, resume and references to Barth Hague, Executive Director, Mennonite.net, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; <barth.hague@mma-online.org>.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***professor of art*** with expertise in ceramics and/or digital graphics/graphic design/digital multimedia. Skills in one or more of the following areas are desirable: art education, photography, art history, gallery administration. Position is full-time, tenure-track; salary and rank commensurate with teaching experience. The M.F.A. in studio art or doctorate in art education with evidence of strong record of creative activity with demonstrated success is preferred. Preferred qualifications include: skill in teaching ceramics and/or computer/digital multimedia/graphic design plus art education, photography, art history and/or skills in gallery administration; ability to teach and manage large studio classes and supervise student use of studio space and related equipment; knowledge of contemporary art issues; appreciation for relationship between art and Christianity as expressed in the Mennonite Church; a minimum of three years of full-time art teaching experience. The successful candidate will be expected to work collaboratively with students and faculty. Responsibilities begin August 2001. Goshen College is a four-year liberal arts institution. More than 1,000 students are enrolled in campus and international programs. The art department supports the general education program and offers an undergraduate degree in art with a variety of concentrations including studio arts, art education, graphic design, pre-architecture and pre-art therapy. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are also expected to share a commitment to this mission. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

  Please send a letter of application, curriculum vita, brief artist's statement, statement of teaching philosophy and vision for teaching within the context of a Christian (Mennonite) liberal arts college, 20 slides of personal work, 20 slides of student work, three letters of reference with phone numbers and SASE for return of materials to: Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <Dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "Employment." Application deadline March 1, 2001. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

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The good and bad in *The Poisonwood Bible*

by Jim Bertsche

Barbara Kingsolver's novel *The Poisonwood Bible*, highlighted by the Oprah Book Club, has experienced sustained, brisk sales and a wide readership. A skilled novelist, Kingsolver sketches her principal characters, members of a fictitious missionary family, in a colorful and captivating manner. My interest was particularly triggered by the fact that she sets her novel in geographical and historical contexts with which Congo Inland Mission/ Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission workers have been well acquainted across the years.

Following are a few themes of her novel that ring true for me:

- the collision between Western and African worldviews;
- the reality and power of an animistic worldview that shapes so much of traditional African rural belief and life;
- the veneration and respect in which village elders are held and the power of these elders to enforce tribal beliefs, customs and traditions;
- the presence and impact of the "nganga," the practitioner of the occult who is at the same time feared and sought by villagers;
- the behind-the-scenes manipulation of Western powers to install and maintain Joseph Mobutu as a "bulwark" against communism in central Africa during the Cold War and the resultant obscene graft and corruption that characterized his regime while the economy and infrastructure of his country steadily crumbled;
- the ease with which missionaries can commit cultural blunders and say things they don't mean due to an inadequate grasp of local dialects and cultures;
- the profound impact of life in Africa upon missionary families.

However, as I read through her novel, the question Why? kept surfacing in my mind. Why did the author cast her main characters as members of a bumbling, dysfunctional missionary family—led by an opinionated, harsh, culturally inept husband and father—that eventually self-destructs? Why did she choose to imply that the Christian faith is inappropriate—even irrelevant—in Africa and cannot take genuine root in African soil?

I can come to only one of two conclusions: either Kingsolver has no awareness of the positive impact of Christian missionaries and the Christian faith all across black Africa, or she has delilberately chosen to ignore all this and portray one missionary family in the worst possible light.

Whatever the case, she reflects no awareness of the many mission posts scattered across the heart of Africa—some even in the geographical area where she situates her novel—that have been islands of education, healing, development, redemption and hope.

Kingsolver reflects no awareness of many missionaries who have mastered local dialects, walked sensitively within the new and different cultures around them and had the wisdom to first ask about cultural patterns before passing judgment on them.

She reflects no awareness of mission centers where teams of missionaries and Africans have been partners, within the bonds of mutual dependence and respect, in a witness to Christ and in the planting of his church.

She reflects no awareness of multiplied thousands of African lives that have been dramatically changed by the grace of God, and she reflects no awareness of the rapid continuing growth of the African Christian community, largely under gifted and committed African leadership.

With the publicity that Kingsolver's book has received, many will read it who have only marginal acquaintance with Africa and little or no knowledge of the nature, scope and results of Christian mission endeavors on that immense continent.

With the publicity that Kingsolver's book has received, many will read it who have only marginal acquaintance with Africa and little or no knowledge of the nature, scope and results of Christian mission endeavors on that immense continent. Should such readers come away from the book suspecting that the missionary family therein depicted—although fictitious—may in fact portray and reflect what Christian mission in Africa has really been all about, it will be to the disservice of the reader and to the discredit of the author.

Jim Bertsche, former executive secretary of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, is a member of Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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Gordon Houser

Be grateful and be aware

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works.—Ephesians 2:10a

For most of us, our work fills up much of our time, half or more of our waking hours during the week. Yet in our congregations we rarely talk about that part of our lives.

God is our model for work. The Creation is an example of the wonderful blend of energy and beauty. God gave work to "adam" (humanity) in the garden (Genesis 2:15).

God also gave community (Genesis 2:18). Thus began labor relations. We are all called to work together in some way, whether at our jobs, in our families and congregations or at school. How well we do that says much about how well we live out God's call in our lives. It also determines how healthy and at peace we are, how much we experience shalom.

The history of labor relations is filled with examples of injustice, of overseers oppressing workers, from the Hebrews in Egypt to African slaves on plantations in the American South to horrible working conditions throughout the world today.

However much some people equate the two, biblical Christianity and free-market capitalism are not always compatible.

Gee, really?

God's design of healthy toil and harmonious relationships has not always been realized. Yet we are called to seek that kind of work, work that is just and joyful.

Prayer walk: Last summer our congregation laid a sidewalk leading from a parking lot we own to our church building. We invited people to buy stones with favorite Scripture verses on them for the sidewalk, making it a prayer walk.

Our family chose Ephesians 2:10, but when it appeared, the "s" was missing from the last word. I rather like it. "Good works" became "good work." Instead of focusing on good deeds, important as they are, perhaps we need to focus more on making the work we do—so large a part of our lives—good.

We tend to individualize our work. We worry about our vocation, our career, our salary. But work is also a communal reality. Unless we find ways to work together, community—whether as a family, a church, a town or a nation—cannot happen. Work is not solely meant to improve ourselves. It is to improve the community in which we live.

The New Testament doesn't say a lot about work, but what it says is instructive. While Jesus says, "The laborer deserves to be paid" (Luke 10:7), Paul calls Christians to "labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy" (Ephesians 4:28b). "A Mennonite View of Labor Relations" (page 5) says, "Work is a means of serving God and fellow humans and must be seen as part of life in the kingdom of God."

In our culture, work is often part of a system of profit-seeking and individualism. According to many, free-market capitalism means that people can make as much as they are able. Thus, the fact that CEOs of major U.S. corporations make 85 times as much as those companies' regular workers is no problem to them.

However much some people equate the two, biblical Christianity and free-market capitalism are not always compatible. At times we have to oppose the way things are and pursue God's original intention for humanity.

Unions: As Wally Kroeker says in his article (page 4), Mennonites have had an ambivalent view of unions. Business owners have had bad experiences with unions that use disruptive, even violent tactics. Yet unions have also helped correct many injustices.

We take much for granted: paid vacations, our salaries, a 40-hour work week, the fact that our children aren't forced into labor. These are all due to the work of unions organized against unjust labor practices.

When business owners and managers pay fair wages and care for their workers, unions are not needed. But this is not always the case. We must be aware of bad labor practices. And while we denounce violence, we must not turn a blind eye to the injustices that abound in workplaces around the world.

Let's talk with each other in our congregations and elsewhere about work. Let's pursue the good work God calls us to, work that is healthy for all.—*gh*

the Mennonite

February 13, 2001

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waiting in the wilderness

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

School spirituality

Memo to Rich Lindberg: I was surprised and troubled to read your "Memo to the Administration" (Jan. 30): As a Mennonite educator who happens to work at the same school you attended, I have found the experiences at my place of work to be quite different from that of the school that you described.

As a former chapel coordinator, I am familiar with the struggles of trying to make faith relevant. Creating a worshipful atmosphere where one can sense God's presence in a room packed with the entire student body can be a daunting task; not everyone experiences God in the same way. Thus, one of my goals was to incorporate a number of different worship styles into our themes for the year. This did not please or challenge every student every chapel, but it did give many students the chance to meet God in a variety of worshipful settings. I think this is where we differ in opinion, Rich. Worship does not only involve listening to music or a speaker but also must involve an active response to God.

I went back into my records and reviewed the chapels during your senior year, Rich. We touched on the topic of racism in conjunction with Martin Luther King Day by inviting African-American Mennonites to share their stories with us. We used a panel of students to reflect on their baptism experiences within the Mennonite church. I shared on three occasions on fear, judging others and time. My colleagues and administrators also shared of their personal faith experiences on 24 occasions. One faculty member shared his conversion experience and his choice to become a Mennonite after serving in the Army. At the start of the new year, my principal shared her own personal faith journey. Another administrator shared how he experienced God while gazing at a star-filled sky while traveling in New Mexico.

But spirituality in Mennonite schools does not only come from the stage in a chapel setting. Here again, Rich, is where I would challenge you to reflect on the relationships you had with your faculty and administration. Did these people model faith to you in how they treated students and colleagues? My hunch is yes.—*Steve Clemens Smucker, Telford, Pa.*

I was troubled by Lindberg's criticism of chapel services at Mennonite schools. I wonder how many of our church schools he has visited to witness these chapels. As someone who has helped plan chapels at both the high school and college level, I know how hard it is to plan for a diverse group of students. We tried to have variety and to offer teaching on a variety of levels in order to reach different students. It is impossible to meet everyone's needs.

Every relationship has ebb and flow, and faith is a relationship with God. I think Lindberg and others who worry about the state of Mennonite students' spirituality and blame the schools for it need to realize that no one stays "on fire for God" forever. We all go through difficult times when we distance ourselves from God and the church, and one of the most natural times to do this is during adolescence. We cannot control teenagers' choices, and we cannot control their faith-responses to God. We cannot make our schools places where the majority of our students are committed, active Christians. We can offer opportunities. We can pray. We can walk alongside our students, but ultimately it is God who will reach them. It is the Holy Spirit who will set them on fire, not us. Lindberg's passion is commendable, but I sense that he has expectations that are unrealistic and also unhelpful. Schools can do (and I have seen them try to do) all the things Lindberg suggests, and students still go through stages of apathy and wander from the faith. But God is still at work in their lives.—*Kris Anne Kuhns Swartley, director of youth ministry, Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.*

Amen and amen to Lindberg's challenge to Mennonite schools to provide spiritual nurture to their students. There is a dire lack of spirituality in Mennonite institutions. I attended a Mennonite institute of higher education in the early 1980s and graduated. There was not only little spiritual leadership from faculty and administration, but the input that was given was largely negative. Students' traditional modes of thinking were challenged but with no correlating spiritual nurture to help bring resolution to the questions that were raised. Lindberg's suggestions of faculty or administrators sharing their testimonies was out of the question. One wondered if there were testimonies to give. (In all fairness, I admit that I do remember one instance of an influential faculty member stating that he did believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I commend him for that.) The spiritual lives of some of the students were torn apart, and they rejected Christ because they were not mature enough to handle the questioning put forth. What spiritual leadership there was came from outside sources and students.

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Steering between grace and truth

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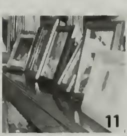
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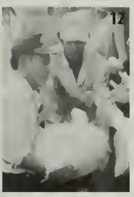
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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

At that point in my life, going through a spiritual crisis, I looked outside the Mennonite church for guidance and leadership. Finding no leadership at the Mennonite institutions, I assumed it was not there at all and stayed outside the Mennonite church for 17 years. One wonders how many other young people with a true spiritual emphasis in their makeup did the same. If we expect to have pastors in our Mennonite churches who truly nurture people, why are we chasing them away from our schools or at least giving them so little spiritual nourishment that they have to look elsewhere? The cover of the Jan. 23 issue asked, "Who Will Lead the Flock?" This question must apply to more than just churches identifying potential pastoral candidates if we are to nurture them all the way through what can be a long and difficult process.

Mennonite Church USA needs to wake up and take seriously the faith of "these little ones." Young people need to have more than just intellectual questions, and when they do have questions, they need intimate care in bringing them to resolution—care in a manner that holds their faith to be a precious thing. The future of much of Mennonite Church USA could depend on it.—*Stanley P. Epp, Newton, Kan.*

Leave the trash behind

I was interested in the Wider World report on the money being made by Tyndale House on the "Left Behind" series (Jan. 23). It is a pity Tyndale is making these big bucks by publishing trashy novels. I suggest that no one over 30 should be allowed to read them because of the bad example set by some of the so-called left-behind saints. We would expect the antichrist to be deceptive and violent, but in this story, so are the saints.—*Daniel Hertzler, Scottdale. Pa.*

Cover photo by Debra Turnrose

Pastoral needs

Alan Kauffman's article "Doubly Blessed" (Jan. 23) comes as a good word for us. Mennonite Church USA will need to work proactively if we are to have strong pastoral leadership in our congregations. This requires major work on three levels: the congregation, the seminaries and the area conferences. Congregations will need to choose potential pastors and send them to seminary for training. Seminaries will need to train for good pastoral leadership. And conferences will need to set better standards for ordination and provide continuing education.

I am appalled by the lack of insight on the part of congregations that are not raising up pastoral leaders. I am also appalled by the lack of insight by area conferences that are not setting standards for ordination and, in some cases, think they can develop leaders without Mennonite seminary education. As congregations, seminaries and area conferences work together under the blessing of God, we can achieve strong pastoral leadership in the future.—*Paul M. Zehr, Lancaster, Pa.*

If the new Mennonite Church USA hopes to eliminate the obstacles that stand in the way of people hearing God's call to pastoral ministry, identifying and growing pastors must become more of the norm.

—Alan Kauffman, "Doubly Blessed," Jan. 23

Across the church we are in a critical need for pastors. Some of the excellent pastors today are those who, in middle age, left their professions or businesses. More and more, we are told, people coming to middle age are making a change. These people have been successful in business or professions. They have many skills, a knowledge of people and relationships as well as maturity, all of which are helpful and needed in pastoring. I believe here is a great resource that could help fill the vacancies in the church. May the Holy Spirit use even this observation to call such people to the work of pastoring God's people. There is no other calling with more challenge and blessing.—*John M. Drescher, Quakertown, Pa.*

One above the others

The Jan. 16 editorial, "Future Begins at Nashville," referred to the "surprise" motion that came from the floor during the St. Louis conference as "asking delegates to reaffirm Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective." That is not what I remember. According to my notes, the resolution stated: "We as an assembly reaffirm our faith statements teaching that sexual relations are reserved for a man and a woman in marriage."

I would have had no problem reaffirming the whole Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective as one of the foundational documents for the new denomination. However, I was among the many who objected to lifting out only one sentence out of only one of the 24 articles included in that document and making that statement alone to be the litmus test for membership. Many of us would be uncomfortable being part of a church whose main identity focused on that one issue.

It is sad to hear people identify the confession of faith, or indeed, the whole Bible, with one narrowly defined sin. I agree with Harley Stucky (Readers Say, Jan. 16) when he asks, "Where in the Bible does it say that homosexuality is the worst of all sins and the only one that we have to be concerned with?"

I agree with the optimism of the Jan. 16 editorial and Lee Snyder's prayer, quoted in the editorial, "that we might yield our limited understanding to the large assurance that God will bring to pass the work [God] has begun." Amen!—*Jim Rugh, Atlanta*

On sin and consensus

Harley Stucky is embarrassed to belong to what feels like a "one-sin church" (Readers Say, Jan. 16). I trust he, like me, has feelings of pride in the Mennonite church, that he embraces its rich call to evangelism and peace, its passionate teaching that God's mercy to us and our mercy to others are one seamless cloth. My turn for embarrassment comes when credentialed church leaders actively push and say that a sin addressed by recent church statements is acceptable and even holy for Mennonites.

Stucky also wonders where the Bible says that "homosexuality is the worst of all sins." I ask this in response: What sin heads Paul's list in Romans 1 as he catalogues the behavior that flows from worshiping the creature rather than the Creator? Note also which sin receives two verses devoted to it, not just a phrase or word. I hasten to add that the sin was not listed so we can wave self-righteous fingers at the sinner (see Romans 2:1-4). But clearly it was listed.

One last comment. There is disagreement over whether Paul's description (e.g. "consumed with passion for one another," Romans 1:27) describes today's same-sex covenant relationships. And there is disagreement on whether the belief that sex is reserved for husbands and wives is soft and nonessential or whether it is firm and one of the essentials of our faith. There should be some sort of churchwide dialogue on this. The only way for consensus to start forming is for us to somehow dialogue together.—*Harold N. Miller, Corning, N.Y.*

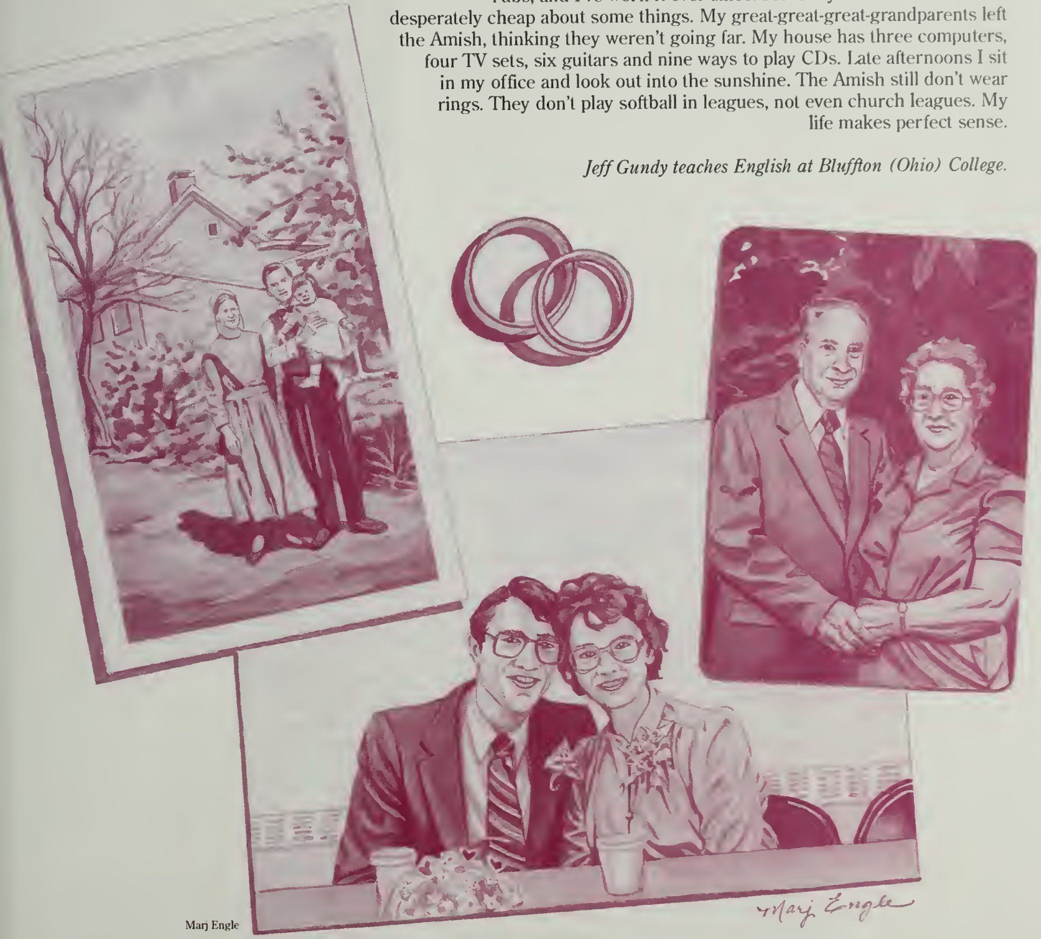
Rings

by Jeff Gundy

I lost my wedding ring playing church league softball in 1983. It slipped through a hole in the pocket of my cutoffs and vanished into a crack in the dry Kansas dirt. Years before that my dad was shelling corn one day when a man jumped off a wagon and snagged his ring on the top edge. The finger stayed behind. Dad came home, put his ring in the box on the dresser, and that was that.

For years I didn't wear a ring and then I found one in a tourist shop in White Rock, British Columbia. Copper and brass, made in Kenya, five bucks. It's rough and a little odd and sometimes makes my finger blue where it rubs, and I've worn it ever since. I love my wife. I'm faithful. I'm desperately cheap about some things. My great-great-great-grandparents left the Amish, thinking they weren't going far. My house has three computers, four TV sets, six guitars and nine ways to play CDs. Late afternoons I sit in my office and look out into the sunshine. The Amish still don't wear rings. They don't play softball in leagues, not even church leagues. My life makes perfect sense.

Jeff Gundy teaches English at Bluffton (Ohio) College.



Marj Engle

Waiting

Wilderness as a motif for congregations

by James M. Lapp

The 21st century offers new opportunities and challenges as we seek to claim the Great Commission for our congregations. Do we hear the call to move from an inward to an outward focus, from a preoccupation with issues to fostering health, from a maintenance to a mission orientation, from an emphasis on program to concern with purpose, from self-preservation to active engagement in ministries that advance Christ's kingdom?

Wilderness is an apt metaphor for where many congregations find themselves. We are in an in-between time, a time of enormous change, with a keen sense of transition but not always clear what we are moving to. We know the status quo will not sustain us through this new century. But what steps should we take to realize more fully God's purposes for the church?

The wilderness metaphor may be helpful for many of our congregations. Wilderness need not be understood as a negative judgment on our life as congregations and conferences. Rather it suggests we are in a period of preparation for something more that will come when God deems us ready for it. We wait and pray and believe God is with us and will bless us in our waiting.

Wilderness suggests we are in a period of preparation for something more that will come when God deems us ready for it. We wait and pray and believe God is with us and will bless us in our waiting.

The Bible offers many references to wilderness. The most prominent picture describes Israel's 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Why this 40-year wilderness sojourn when they could have made the journey in 40 days or at most 40 weeks? God seemed to know they needed this time to change from a slave people to a transformed people ready for the Promised Land. Then there is the story of Jesus spending 40 days fasting in the wilderness, experiencing severe temptations, immediately following his baptism and in preparation for his ministry.

When God wants to do something new, the wilderness provides the necessary setting for spiritual formation in preparation for the next major challenge. Are we at one of these junctures in our life as churches and as a broader North American church? Rather than the wilderness being an indictment on the quality of our faith, it may reflect the high esteem with which God views us. Could this be an important part of the process of becoming Great Commission churches?

Most of us do not want to be in the wilderness unless we can go on our own terms and vacation there.

We are a fix-it culture, and the wilderness represents a setting that is experienced, not fixed. Are we willing to do the wilderness work of reflection and growth?

We want things quickly, not wanting to defer pleasure, always in a hurry. Are we willing to do the wilderness work of waiting on God, to listen, to discern God's direction before proceeding?

We are an ordered, managed culture for whom chaos and change create anxiety. Can we trust God when things do not seem clear, when there are no easy answers and things do not work out to our standards of success?

We are a short-range culture, with expectations of immediate results. Can we adjust our clocks and calendars to God's perspective, to think more broadly and long-range, where 40 days or even 40 years in the wilderness are not a waste of time?

Memories of Egypt: The wilderness makes us anxious. We hear cries for leaders who will take charge, define the boundaries, tidy up the doctrines and shape up the errant members. It's not easy to be in the wilderness. It's not

n the wilderness

easy to be leaders in the wilderness. Witness the experience of Moses and the rebellious people he contended with, those who wanted an idol like their neighbors, people clamoring for food and water. None of those with memories of Egypt were deemed ready to be part of the new program in the Promised Land. It took a whole new generation to make the transition to a transformed people. Can we do better?

It is not that we have no vision during these wilderness years. While we have no simple answers and solutions to the dilemmas of the wilderness, we do sense God calling us to certain tasks that are essential to being more fully prepared for our Great Commission calling.

'Balcony work': First, we must do serious "balcony work." In November 1999, at a pastors' breakfast, speaker Gil Rendle said that a key responsibility of church leaders in times like ours is to go out on the balcony and view the larger scene. If we stay too close to the task, to the issues, we lose perspective. We need times and settings when we stand back and seek the perspective of God in our task. Given our busy, highly packed schedules, congregational leaders need to give priority, at least annually, to this kind of balcony work. Otherwise we may get lost or stuck in the wilderness.

Prayer: Second, we need to give ourselves to prayer as part of the spiritual formation required for the Great Commission work awaiting us. Learning to wait in quietness before God, to listen to God's Spirit, to prayerfully reflect on what is happening within and among us, will go a long way toward reducing agenda anxiety and opening new possibilities not even imagined before. Interceding for one another may do more than a strategy session in the church council. The wilderness provides an ideal place to grow in the practice of prayer.

Discernment: Third, we will need to cultivate the capacity to discern together like never before. Pastors and elders need to learn to listen for the voice of God in the conversation until we say, "It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us." Congregations need to practice discernment that exceeds the typical, perfunctory business meeting. Careful adherence to American democratic procedures will not suffice. Discernment calls for time, study, prayer and listening to one another. Things will only get more difficult and complex in the coming decades. Unless we wish simply to drift with the ebb and flow of the culture and churches around us, we need to learn skills of spiritual discernment.

Relationships: Fourth, we will need to give urgent attention to fostering relationships of trust and love. Remember the bickering of the people of Israel in the wilderness? When we are anxious, we take it out on one another, leaders, neighbors, the poor. Will we allow fears and stresses to cause division among us? Or will we in "speaking the truth in love … grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ" (Ephesians 4:15)? Growing in trust and love is priority work for the days ahead.

We need not fear this wilderness time. As in Israel of old, God will provide a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to guide us. There will be manna and water as we need it. When serpents threaten to strike and destroy, God offers a way of escape if we will but look and believe. There are leaders—Moseses, Aarons and Miriams—sent from God to guide us. Perhaps, as Jesus experienced, angels will come and minister to us in the wilderness. When Elijah fled in fear to the wilderness to escape the threat of Ahab and Jezebel, God was there to meet him and sustain him. And in that setting Elijah heard a new voice, a still, small voice of reassurance from God.

Unless we wish simply to drift with the ebb and flow of the culture and churches around us, we need to learn skills of spiritual discernment.

We, too, can be assured God is with us—not to rescue us from the wilderness but to talk with us, provide for us, guide us, go before us, empower us to meet the giants we will encounter. God will lead us into whatever new land, new experience and new place of growth God intends for us. The wilderness can be a frightening place, but when God is there, it can be a wonderful place of preparation and growth. It holds much promise for us in our efforts to be Great Commission leaders and churches.

James M. Lapp is conference pastor for Franconia Conference. This article is reprinted with permission from Franconia Conference News.

difficult
texts of
the Bible

But Jesus responded, "He wrote those instructions only as a concession to your hard-hearted wickedness. But God's plan was seen from the beginning of creation, for 'He made them male and female.' 'This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.'"—Mark 10:5-8a NLT

The Old Testament in relation to the New

Eleventh in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Willard M. Swartley

This text speaks of a commandment (not Torah as such) regulating the divorce of a wife (Deuteronomy 24:1-4), given to Israel because of hardness of heart. It seems to be a Mennonite tendency—perhaps because of our understandings on war—to view the Old Testament as a problem, with an inferior quality as Scripture.

In another vein, Philip Yancey points out in *The Bible Jesus Read* that general knowledge of the Old Testament is at an all-time low. In a comedy routine, Jay Leno found one person in the audience who knew only one of the 10 commandments: "God helps those who help themselves." Further, 14 percent of Americans, according to a Wheaton College professor, identified Joan of Arc as Noah's wife.

We should not forget that the only Scripture Jesus and Paul knew is what Christians today call the Old Testament.

We should not forget that the only Scripture Jesus and Paul knew is what Christians today call the Old Testament. Rarely does a New Testament text put an Old Testament passage on discount; rather, hundreds of times the New Testament cites the Old Testament to authorize a particular point or clinch an argument. Indeed, Mark 10:5-8 so illustrates. Immediately after declaring this particular commandment on divorce was given because of hardness of heart, Jesus quotes Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 to authorize the male-female relationship in marriage to be indissoluble. This is God's purpose for marriage.

A worst-case scenario is to take a text like Mark 10:5-8, confuse commandment with law, then confuse modern Christian ideas of law with Torah, and then equate law with Old Testament. It is wrong—indeed heretical—to think that the Old Testament exists because of hardness of heart. That this error has occurred too often may explain partly why missionaries over the last century—including Mennonites—have taught mostly the New Testament in overseas settings (and perhaps hoped that the people wouldn't ask much about the Old Testament). This practice has caused some African Christians to think the missionaries were trying to deceive them. For when they finally studied the Old Testament, they loved it. It connected with their culture and became the primary Scripture ordering life in their communities.

Genesis to Malachi: The relation between the Testaments has problematic elements, but the overwhelming fact is that the Old Testament is the precondition of the New. What early Christians had as Scripture were those books from Genesis to Malachi with later, so-called apocryphal books included. Continuity between the Testaments must be the starting point for any discussion that honors the New Testament's massive quoting of the Old—with allusions, over 1,000 times—to substantiate a given point. (Acts 15 is a classic, since only with James' quotation is the issue resolved.)

But there are qualifiers to the continuity. There is intracanonical critique within the Old Testament, such as those texts that say God never instructed or desired Israel to offer sacrifices (Jeremiah 7:22 and Amos 5:21-22; Psalms 50 and 51), while many others clearly say God did command sacrifices and burnt offerings. Further, across the Testaments, as well as within each, are diverse emphases, such as I have treated in my book *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women* (Herald Press, 1983).

Temple and kingship: My book *Israel's Scripture Traditions and the Synoptic Gospels: Story Shaping Story* (Hendrickson, 1993) shows a more foundational relation between the Testaments. I show that the structure and thought of the Synoptics' presentation of Jesus is shaped by Old Testament motifs of liberation, possessing the land, temple and kingship. What it also demonstrates is that these traditions were reshaped, indeed transformed, by Jesus and the early church that gave us the Gospels. Without the Old Testament there would be no comprehension and presentation of Jesus and the Gospels' message as we have it. The same case for strong continuity can be made for the Pauline (recall Paul's appeal to Abraham for justification by faith) and Johannine writings.

Over the last century many efforts have been made to explain the relation of the Testaments: prophecy-fulfillment, promise-fulfillment, typology, allegory, salvation-history, old and new covenants and more. All these contain helpful insights. Here are some continuities:

- the same God of both Testaments, called upon as loving Father ("abba" in New—with maternal imagery also), Redeemer, Creator and Judge, together with the proclamation of God's sovereignty, freedom and rule over all;
- the same dynamic of salvation and liberation from the bondage of human sin and hardness of heart (see our text; Mark 6:50-52; Hebrews 3:8-12), freedom from the domination of political and economic power over God's faith community and hope that God will vindicate the faithful;
- God's identification with and hearing the cry of the victims of violence and oppressive power (Isaiah 53, Jesus and those who follow in his steps);
- an eschatological vision of God's new world coming;
- the same call to faithful worship, caring for the poor, widows, orphans and others in need, and trust in God as One abounding in steadfast love, righteousness or justice, mercy, grace and desire for human shalom.

Nonretaliation: Where then is discontinuity or transformation? In some of the above texts, the New Testament intensifies what is already present in the Old, especially God's identification with the sufferers—note Jesus' Passion and death (see *Violence Renounced* [Pandora Press U.S., 2000], especially the essays by Sandor Goodhart [Jewish] and René Girard [Christian]). For Mennonites and other peace churches the move from limited nonretaliation (Exodus 21:23-24) to complete nonretaliation (Matthew 5:39; Romans 12:17-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:15) is most important. But, as earlier studies on nonresistance pointed out (Guy F. Hershberger and John E. Lapp), precursors for this nonresistance to evil are already in the Old Testament. And if war in the Old Testament, like divorce, is explained by hardness of the heart among God's people, then nonparticipation in war as God's will is normative for both Testaments (as Millard Lind has sought to show in *God Is a Warrior*). Related to the war issue, a strong stance against all idolatry, with its practices of sorcery, soothsaying and divination, is Jewish and Christian (Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Isaiah 2:6-18; Acts 8,13,19).

Further, the so-called six Antitheses (Matthew 5:21-48) are really Supertheses, since their bases are already in the Old Testament, as verse 17 implies. The Beatitudes, instructions on almsgiving, prayer and fasting, as well as trusting in God and not in Mammon, all have strong bases in Old Testament teachings. Indeed, Jesus was a Jew—so why not?

The Son of Humanity: The key distinctions between the Testaments are not ethical but Christological. The heart of the difference lies in understanding who Jesus was and is—and precisely in relation to the faith of Israel. Once the early Christians came to know that Jesus was and is the Messiah, Son of Humanity, Son of God, and exalted Lord at God's right hand, then the seed was sown for "the Way" sect (Acts 9:2; 22:4) to part ways with Judaism and be later identified as Christian. With this decisive belief in Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah, the mission to the Gentiles was on schedule, according to the Scriptures (Romans 15:9-12, citing four Old Testament texts). Early Christianity came to see also that Christ fulfilled the ceremonial laws and sacrificial system and transformed the language in fresh and creative ways; but even on this there are parallel Old Testament developments (e.g. Psalm 50:23 and Hebrews 13:15; Romans 12:1).

Without the Old Testament there would be no comprehension and presentation of Jesus and the Gospels' message as we have it.

Because of the unique words and work of Jesus as Messiah, Christians begin new life through baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. Further, they regularly observe the Lord's Supper, which celebrates Jesus' giving of his life for our salvation. The Old Testament analogies are circumcision and Passover. Similar meanings are present in both faith communities, but Jesus as Messiah (Christ) marks the essential difference. Salvation through him, as incarnate God, stands as the Christians' watchword.

Moral life: The resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit to believers are distinctly Christian beliefs. Through the cross, resurrection and Spirit we become children of God, empowered for mission, peacemaking and loving in this world, through prayer and holiness, seeking justice and shalom for all. Further, the moral life is now grounded in and modeled after Jesus Christ—in life, death and resurrection—and empowered by the Spirit.

How do we best understand this difficult text? Not by reading only it but by assessing it in the larger reality of the continuities and transformations between the Testaments.

Willard M. Swartley is professor of New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

MCC thrift stores combining old and new

Ideas for future include retro clothing, on-line auctions

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Mike Neff, a daily customer at Crossroad Gift and Thrift store in Norristown, Pa., peruses the clothes selection. Crossroad is one of 101 thrift shops in the United States and Canada benefitting Mennonite Central Committee. The stores generated nearly $5 million in sales for MCC last year.

AKRON, Pa.—Thrift shops that send proceeds to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) are generally known for what's old: the used items they sell and their long-standing support of community and international service.

But as the business of thrift thrives more than 25 years after the first MCC shop opened, organizers of the 101 shops in North America are also full of ideas for expansion. They are focusing on what's new: new approaches to selling, new locations, new ways of staying in touch.

Barb Schrag is coordinator for U.S. MCC thrift shops, a new position based in Freeman, S.D. She recently completed a whirlwind tour of 38 shops. What she saw varied from small operations like Crossroad Gift and Thrift in Norristown, Pa., to the large Care & Share Shoppes in nearby Souderton, which supply donated items to satellite stores, including Crossroad. Thousands of volunteers as well as paid managers help with day-to-day operations across the United States and Canada.

"We're looking at places to start new stores, and we're looking at different ways of doing thrift," says Schrag, who edits a newsletter for shop managers.

Schrag sees opportunities for smaller specialty operations and skills brought by the next generation—the generation that has grown up seeing thrift items as part of an adventurous personal style rather than as dingy cast-offs. Schrag's ideas for new approaches include retro and vintage clothing, collectibles, used books, home furnishings, jewelry and on-line auctions.

As an example of a creative approach, she cites the Et Cetera Shop in Hutchinson, Kan., which has set up a used book area with reading areas and tables. "It has a Barnes & Noble feel," said Scrag, referring to the retail book giant.

The newest U.S. store, Abundant Blessings Thrift Shop, is in Mifflintown, Pa., and a new store will also open in the coming months in Kidron, Ohio. As new thrift shops open, they face questions of location.

"If you look at the addresses of the shops, many are on Main Street USA or the equivalent," Schrag says. "Twenty-five years ago this was the perfect location."

But today, she says, successful retail stores have followed traffic to highways.

Some of the shops also sell fairly-traded crafts from Ten Thousand Villages (formerly called Selfhelp Crafts), a program of MCC. The idea for this combination came in 1974, when then Bluffton, Ohio, resident Lois Kreider decided to combine crafts with a thrift shop like one that had already opened in Ontario. Income from the resale items, she reasoned, could cover rent and other operating costs so they could have a permanent outlet for the Selfhelp items.

Back then, Kreider recalls, "thrift stores didn't have a very good image." To ease fears that the store would not be able to stay afloat, she and other founders contacted 20 people to each give $100 to assure that rent could be paid for the first year.

Customers and volunteers responded enthusiastically. Kreider went on to manage a similar store in Newton, Kan., and coordinate thrift-shop efforts around the country.

Last year, U.S. thrift stores generated about $2.3 million for MCC, while Canadian stores raised $2.6 million (U.S.).—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

Sold out is story of Indonesian shop

When the Semarang, Indonesia, thrift shop opened for the first time in September 1999, it was virtually sold out after only 45 minutes.

"We were going to open the doors at 10 in the morning, but people were almost bursting in the door, so we opened at 9:30," says Agus Setianto, chair of the board of the thrift shop, which is run by the GKMI, one of Indonesia's three Mennonite synods.

Andreas Christanday helped start the shop, located in the GKMI headquarters, after seeing similar shops while visiting North America as part of a Mennonite Central Committee program.

"About 80 percent of [church members are] … mostly singing, praying, witnessing, all spiritual things, which are good," Christanday says. "The shop also helps us to serve locally."—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

MVS term has worker living with dying

Happy times, heavy times found in AIDS assignment

WASHINGTON—The Washington building is not simply a place to live. "Joseph's House is a place where men come to die," says Nathalie Cowells.

Cowells is halfway through her one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) term as a case manager and personal care aide at Joseph's House, home to a dozen men who were homeless and are living with the reality that they are dying of AIDS. Joseph's House provides medical care, medications and the possibility of dying in peace and with dignity.

On the mantel in the dining room sit seven photographs, arranged with care in an assortment of frames. Other photographs grace bookshelves in the living room. All are of men who died at Joseph's House.

"Some people who visit ask me if it's creepy to have them around," Cowells says. "But it's important for the men who live here to know that once they're gone, they won't be forgotten. That's the great thing about Joseph's House. There's a great feeling of family.

"There are so many happy times here, but they're balanced by some really heavy times."

Cowells tells of visiting Mark in the hospital shortly after she began at Joseph's House.

"Sometimes we would have great conversations; sometimes he wouldn't talk to me at all," she says. "But we were building a relationship. One morning I came in, and I was talking to someone about how I was going to visit Mark. She said, 'I don't know how to tell you this, but Mark died last night.'

"All the reality of Joseph's House hit me like a big freight train. I wasn't ready for him to die. For three months, I really struggled, partly with the death of these men but also partly with the lives that preceded death, with the pain and suffering that these men go through."

Joseph's House has about 20 people on staff, including a licensed personal care aide in the house 24 hours a day. Cowells is the only full-time volunteer.

"This job has reinforced the way I view everything," says Cowells, who worked in a hospital in Goshen, Ind., before joining MVS and who plans to enter medical school next fall. "When I came here, I had never worked with men, I had never worked with homeless, I had never worked with people with AIDS. I was used to a fast-paced workplace. Suddenly my job was to build relationships and sometimes just to sit with someone with no communication."

The men who come to Joseph's House all meet three criteria: lack of ability to live elsewhere, a commitment to being clean and sober and a diagnosis of third-, or end-, stage AIDS.

Cowell pokes her head into another room and smiles at the sleeping form on the bed. "I wish you could meet Daniel," she says. "He's wonderful to talk to."

"I've always thought of being a doctor for the underserved populations, but before, I never had the faces to put with those people," Cowells says. "Over these months, I became much more comfortable with just being present with someone, both in living life and in dying."

But the challenges of working with the possibility of death each day are hard. Cowells says today is especially tough because one of the residents died last night.

"As much as I'm fulfilled by this job, as much as I love this job, it's a very difficult job," she says. "If I have one cup of emotional energy to get through the day, it's gone by noon. Then it's just surviving the rest of the day. Some days I come home incredibly exhausted and drained."

The energy to continue, Cowells says, often comes from her MVS house.

"When I come home, I'm surrounded by people who weren't at Joseph's House all day," she says. "I can absorb some of the vitality of others. I've felt really supported, really fortunate in my housemates."

But, Cowells says, the pain she sees each day is part of a larger problem. "While I'm so happy that Joseph's House exists, there needs to be something done about the [health-care] system," she says. "A friend the other day said that what we're doing here is like spooning water out of a bathtub while the faucet is still running.

"Somebody, he said, needs to turn off the faucet."—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

As much as I'm fulfilled by this job, as much as I love this job, it's a very difficult job.

—Nathalie Cowells

Mennonite Voluntary Service worker Nathalie Cowells stands beside photographs of men who have died while living at Joseph's House, the AIDS ministry in Washington where she serves as a case manager and personal care aide.

MBM photo by Grant E. Rissler

CPT continues in Puerto Rico, explores Colombia

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Twenty-seven Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) delegates on Feb. 1 presented a letter to the Roosevelt Roads Naval Base, urging an end to the U.S. Navy presence on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. The delegation has been in Puerto Rico since Jan. 25 listening to groups involved in the conflict around U.S. and NATO use of Vieques as a practice bombing range since World War II.

Upon entering the base to present the letter, seven CPT delegates were arrested, detained for several hours, issued "ban and bar" letters and released. The letters prohibit the delegates from ever again entering Roosevelt Roads.

CPT has sent delegations to Vieques for the past year. The U.S. Navy controls 70 percent of the 21-mile-long island, including shoreline. The Navy is joined by NATO partners in practicing military maneuvers on the island.

"Viequenses should be no more subject to ... bombing than should my family in Michigan," said delegation member Rachael Wass Smith.

Meanwhile, four CPT members left in late January for three months in Colombia to investigate a possible presence in that violence-wracked country. The members went at the invitation of the Colombian Mennonite Church and Justapaz, a Colombian Mennonite peace and justice organization.—*CPT News Service*

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After the flood

Vietnamese Mennonites unload relief supplies for victims of the most extensive flooding of the Mekong River in 40 years. The group on Jan. 14 distributed rice and money to 250 families and gave school supplies to 200 students. Five doctors plus nurses and pharmacists set up a temporary clinic where they saw 450 patients. The relief goods were supplied by Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee. The group also visited two local congregations.

Magazine board OKs redesign proposal

GOSHEN, Ind.—Three years after its debut as one of the first signs of the emerging Mennonite Church USA, *The Mennonite* will re-examine itself. At its Jan. 19-20 meeting in Goshen, the Interim Periodical Board approved a proposal to redesign the magazine. The IPB is the magazine's board of directors.

The redesign process will also include the possibility of changing *The Mennonite*'s frequency from weekly to biweekly and an examination of its content.

"We are especially excited about moving to an increasingly pastoral tone in both news reporting and feature article selection," said board chair Cheryl Zehr Walker.

Feedback will be solicited in a readers' survey and from participants at this summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn. The new look is expected to be unveiled in January 2002.

The board also approved creating the position of editor emeritus and named J. Lorne Peachey, founding editor of *The Mennonite,* to that position. His responsibilities will include providing counsel during the redesign process and other assignments from editor Everett Thomas.

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Respect key for Muslim mission work

NEWTON, Kan.—After living for the last 13 years among Muslim people in Burkina Faso, Donna and Loren Entz have found that respecting the society's elders and building relationships are essential to their ministry.

The Entzes were among the first workers sent to Burkina Faso with the Commission on Overseas Mission under Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in 1978. In the early years of their ministry, the common assumption was that mission work among such poor people needed to start with development work, bringing evangelism through the back door.

But the Entzes discovered, "If you're respectful to the Muslim people, learning to understand their culture and customs, you don't have to have high-profile development work in order to connect people with the biblical message," Donna says.

Development happens today in the Entzes' ministry but is not the focal point. "We found that people were excited when we talked about God," Loren says.

The Entzes' assignment in the village of Saraba, where they and their three children have lived since 1987, is to live there and be a part of village life. As they began the learning process, they realized the importance of taking everything to the village elders. That was important in introducing the Entzes' taped translation of the Old Testament.

"We had official meetings with the elders in Saraba and in Samoghohiri," Donna says. "This was OK because we were seen as messengers with a word from God for them. Culturally, there is great respect for messengers."

The Old Testament tapes have been enthusiastically received. "Imagine being Muslim and never hearing any Muslim teaching in your own language," Loren says. "The Qu'ran is in Arabic. ... Think of hearing about Abraham, Moses, Solomon and Hagar [for the first time]."

Acceptance of the Entzes' work is also made easier by the fact that the common people do not have the historical knowledge of Christianity, particularly Christians' treatment of Muslims during the Crusades, so there are not the same prejudices as might be found in other Islamic contexts.

In addition, Donna says, "it's important that we are nonviolent, that Loren refused military service in Vietnam. This has made a big difference. So has the fact that we affirm their belief in one God.

"We have spent 13 years building trust and relationships. This is so important in a traditional, face-to-face society. We have time to take part in whatever is going on in the village."

The Entzes are currently on a one-year North America assignment.—*Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and AIMM news services*

At **MEDA,**
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It's tough being a single mom. Employment options are limited, wages are often low. That's why Eve Allen and Kim Duszynski of Toledo, Ohio started their own cleaning business. But problems soon arose: they knew how to clean, but not how to run a business.

They turned to ASSETS Toledo, a business training program for low-income people supported by MEDA's Northwest Ohio chapter and the Toledo Mennonite Church. "It changed our lives," says Eve. "We learned all the things we needed to do to make our business successful." One day they hope to provide jobs for other single moms.

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Record number attend AMBS Pastors' Week

ELKHART, Ind.—The Jan. 29-Feb. 1 Pastors' Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart drew more than 250 participants, the most ever in the event's 13 years.

With the theme of "Recovering Spiritual Healing," presenters Walter Wink and June Keener Wink explored New Testament stories of healing and what can be learned from them for ministry today. The Winks are faculty members at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City.

Walter Wink said he had done a quick survey of the first 10 chapters of Mark and discovered that about half of Jesus' public ministry was related to spiritual healing. Wink called on churches to reclaim a role in healing, noting that people are seeking this because they do not always experience healing in other arenas.

MCC to expand its work among China's poor

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) will continue to expand its work in China, the agency's executive committee decided at its Jan. 13 meeting in Akron.

MCC is halfway through a five-year poverty alleviation program being conducted in conjunction with the Chinese and Canadian governments and Amity Foundation, a Chinese agency with Christian roots.

Since 1981, MCC has sent teachers to China through China Educational Exchange (CEE), an inter-Mennonite exchange program. Then in 1998, MCC began working with women's groups, literacy, water development and other programs to reduce poverty in several provinces.

The executive committee's action means MCC will continue its involvement with CEE and explore ways to do more traditional development work. Depending on results of an evaluation of the poverty alleviation project, MCC will continue working with the Chinese and Canadian governments or seek other partnerships or develop its own projects. *—MCC News Service*

$8,000 raised for Mexican entrepreneur work

FRANCONIA, Pa.—A Jan. 29 fund-raiser at Franconia Mennonite Church generated $8,000 to help low-income entrepreneurs in Mexico City. The event was sponsored by Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Franconia Conference. The funds will support Micro MEDA Mexico, which began after Mexico City Mennonites asked MEDA to help them improve the economic well-being of church members and other people in their communities.*—MEDA News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Feb. 13, 1974—The church properties of the General Conference Mennonite Church mission work in Taiwan are transferred to the national conference, the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan.

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For information: Send an e-mail to clergyrenewal@yahoo.com or call 317/916-7302 or write Lilly Endowment Inc., Religion Division, 2801 North Meridian Street, P.O. Box 88068, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208. Indiana clergy should apply only to the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations.

Events

Mennonite Central Committee Central States annual meeting, March 3, at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church. Public meeting at 7 p.m., "Stories From our Global Community." For information, contact MCC Central States, 316-283-2720; email <centralstates@mail.mcc.org>.

Hymn Sing for Peace, April 7, Washington, across from the White House; sponsored by First Mennonite Church, Richmond, Va. For information, contact Dave Powell at 804-262-2703; email <ecopow@erols.com>.

Workers

Bachmann, Matthias, Aspach, Germany, began a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment Aug. 11, 2000, as a carpenter with Habitat for Humanity in Richmond, Va.

Brown, Lowell, Pittsburgh, began a one-year MVS assignment Oct. 15, 2000, as an art and communication staff person with New American Dream in Washington.

Dowler, Marion, Victoria, B.C., began a one-year MVS assignment Dec. 4, 2000, as literacy coordinator and community support worker at Welcome Home Community in Edmonton.

Greaser, Tamara, Telford, Pa., began a one-year MVS assignment Oct. 8, 2000, teaching second grade at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Koehn, Sarah, Dighton, Kan., began a two-year MVS assignment Jan. 9 as program assistant for Native Ministries Canada at Riverton (Man.) Fellowship Circle.

Mathies, Kristen, Kitchener, Ont., began an 11½-month MVS assignment Jan. 5 as United Nations intern for Mennonite Central Committee in New York.

Field Trainer

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking a field trainer to provide training and support to agents (MMA counselors) who are in their first two years of tenure. These agents are located in the Pennsylvania and Mid-Atlantic regions; position will likely be located in the Lititz, Pennsylvania regional office.

Qualified applicants will hold or be willing to obtain a life and health insurance license as well as securities registrations as necessary; will be well organized and possess strong communication and teaching skills; will be comfortable with a variety of PC-based software programs; and will have an appreciation for the Anabaptist church beliefs. Two years experience in financial services and/or insurance sales is preferred.

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Meier, Sarah, Dakota, Ill., began a one-year MVS assignment Jan. 9 as a mentor to teen mothers for Youth Development Services and as Interfaith Ministries staff person in Wichita, Kan.

Mulkey, Shalom, Carlsbad, Calif., began a two-year MVS assignment Jan. 2 as local program coordinator for the Washington MVS unit.

Thyren, Lana, Maple Grove, Minn., began a one-year MVS assignment Jan. 9 as a caseworker at Angel Guardian Children and Family Services in Manhattan, N.Y.

Worth, Debra, Kitchener, Ont., began a two-year MVS assignment Jan. 16 as a case manager for Lutheran Social Services in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Births

Birky, Connor Kurtis, Dec. 28, 2000, to Denise (Stuckey) and Kurtis Birky, Gibson City, Ill.

Bixler, Abigail Rebecca, Nov. 7, 2000, to Amy Bixler, Indianapolis.

Butsakone, Andy Peachey, Nov. 30, 2000, to Khamko Butsakone and Kris Peachey, Vientiane, Laos.

Friesen, Henrie Pieter, Jan. 21, to Kristine and Matt Friesen, Minneapolis.

Hiebner, Jade Emily, Jan. 19, to Corianne (Kroeker) and Troy Hiebner, Henderson, Neb.

Hiebner, Noah Michael, Jan. 17, to Christi (Jensen) and Steve Hiebner, Henderson, Neb.

Holden, Olivia Grace, Dec. 31, 2000, to Chuck and Glenda (Steiner) Holden, Chesapeake, Va.

Leyden, Trevor Dean, Jan. 13, to Andrea (Litwiller) and Mike Leyden, Washington, Iowa.

Lockett, Maleki Cortez, Jan. 22, to Larry and Shelby (Stutzman) Lockett, Washington, Iowa.

Metzler, Samantha Abigail, Nov. 25, 2000, to Andrea (Forrey) and Joel Metzler, Lancaster, Pa.

Moser, Syreinna Lee, Jan. 19, to Bradley and Samantha (Arnold) Moser, Carthage, N.Y.

Osborne, Anna Kathleen, Jan. 22, to Jeff and Maria Osborne, Minneapolis.

Schwartz, Noah Lee, Jan. 12, to Jennifer (Blucker) and Rick Schwartz, Nappanee, Ind.

Showalter, Tessa Marie, Jan. 15, to Glen and Kim (Yoder) Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Yoder, Olivia Maria, Jan. 15, to Emily (Yoder) and Shawn Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Zook, Joel Darrin, Dec. 28, 2000, to Cristin (Byler) and Darrin Zook, Belleville, Pa.

Marriages

Good/Neil: Timothy Good, Landisville, Pa., and Amy Neil, McDowell, Va., Dec. 16, 2000, at Word of Faith Church, Monterey, Va.

Groff/Stoner: Janet Groff, Manheim, Pa., and Lowell Stoner, Fredericksburg, Pa., Jan. 20 at East Fairview Church of the Brethren, Manheim.

Hollingsworth/Parker: Rachel Hollingsworth, Johnstown, Pa., and Benjamin Parker, Windber, Pa., Dec. 28, 2000, at Crossroads Community Church, Johnstown.

Neill/Sommers: Linda Neill, Concord, Mich., and Ryan Sommers, Amboy, Ind., Dec. 31, 2000, at Oakbrook Community Church, Kokomo, Ind.

Deaths

Brubaker, Joseph, 88, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 29, 2000. Spouse: Miriam Erb Brubaker (deceased). Parents: Landis and Vernetta Burkholder Brubaker (deceased). Survivor: daughter Martha Brubaker. Funeral: Dec. 4 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Erb, Alvin, 68, Shickley, Neb., died Dec. 25, 2000, of a rare blood disease. Spouse: Ruth Stutzman Erb. Parents: Mose and Ida Schweitzer Erb (deceased). Other survivors: children Merle, Bill, Jerry; five grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Henderson, Earl, 79, Lyndhurst, Va., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Margaret Henderson (deceased). Parents: Harry and Alda Henderson (deceased). Survivors: son Ronald; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Waynesboro, Va.

Lantz, Ruth, 83, Newport News, Va., died Jan. 7. Parents: Harvey and Della Lantz (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 10 at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Peachey, Elsie Glick, 89, Lewistown, Pa., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Roy Peachey (deceased). Parents: Gideon and Nancy Yoder Glick (deceased). Survivors: children Arlene Byler, Marjorie Laughlin, Robert; eight grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Roth, Jasper John, 79, Paxton, Ill., died Jan. 15. Spouse: Dolorez Good Roth. Parents: Amos and Sarah Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children LaVonne Ledell, LaVerne Slone, Karlene King, Kristine Shoup, John, Martin, LuCinda Shaver; 18 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Schlegel, Aal, 83, Shickley, Neb., died Jan. 10 of heart failure. Spouse: Edna Eichelberger Schlegel. Parents: Benjamin and Lena Lichti Schlegel (deceased). Other survivors: children Lester, Joyce, Dallas, Pat Swartzendruber, John; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Sensenig, Florence Brubaker, 100, Lancaster, Pa., died Dec. 17, 2000. Spouse: Elmer Sensenig (deceased). Parents: Ammon and Hettie Ann Metzler Brubaker (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Evelyn, Miriam Gingrich; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 20 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Swartzendruber, Donald, 64, Wayland, Iowa, died Dec. 29, 2000, of cancer. Spouse: Karen Swartzendruber. Parents: Rolla and Thresa Swartzendruber (deceased). Other survivors: children Rick, DeAnne. Funeral: Jan. 2 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Wyse, Marlin, 79, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 13. Spouse: Aldine Eichelberger Wyse. Other survivors: children Bonnie Kauffman, Marla Mast, Lynette Gingerich; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has one opening for ***single person*** for a one-year voluntary service assignment beginning May 1.

  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is looking for a full-time ***youth pastor*** to work primarily with junior and senior youth.

  For more information or to apply, contact Youth Pastor Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-862-2595; fax 219-862-2178; email <ycmc@juno.com>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp** seeks ***executive director and program director***. BBC is a small Mennonite camp nestled in the Green Mountains of Plymouth, Vt. The camp has a mission focus with many outdoor and nature-oriented programs. These positions will be available August 2001.

  Please send a resume and letter of interest to Regina Beidler, P.O. Box 124, Randolph Center, VT 05061. Other questions and inquiries can be directed to <bbeidler@quest-net.com>.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center in southern Michigan, is looking for a ***food service manager*** starting ASAP. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Check Amigo out at <www.amigocentre.org>.

  Contact Dana L. Sommers at 616-651-2811 or <dana@amigocentre.org>.

- **Canadian Mennonite University** is seeking faculty for tenure track positions for September 2001 in the following three areas: ***leadership studies, political studies and sociology***. For detailed information about these positions, please see our website <www.cmu.ca>. All openings are subject to budgetary approval. CMU encourages both women and men to apply. CMU is an association of three Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg, Manitoba, committed to the biblical faith and rooted in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing-care retirement community with Franconia Mennonite Conference, seeks a full-time ***chaplain*** to provide spiritual leadership and care for its residents. Preferred candidates will have experience as a Mennonite-Anabaptist chaplain or pastor, M.Div. or equivalent and CPE training.

  Send resume before March 9 to Chaplain Search Committee, Rockhill Mennonite Community, 3250 Slate Rd., Sellersville, PA 18960; fax 215-257-7390; email <gschlicher@rmcomm.org>.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

  Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

- **Independent group family practice** in rural college town seeks board-certified ***family physician*** to join us (3 FPs, 1 NP), practicing full primary-care continuum across street from Manchester College (liberal arts, 1,100 students). Our 1-in-8 call rotation allows career/family life balance. Located NE Indiana on Eel River, North Manchester (pop. 6,500) is only 20 min. from excellent county hospital with OB/GYN and wide-range specialty support. Tertiary hospitals nearby Fort Wayne. Our town has own symphony, superb new library, children's programs, fine schools. Strong Anabaptist heritage. "Tour" town at <www.nmanchester.com>.

  Inquire Dr. Pamela Higgins, 219-982-2102; or practice-mgr. Dan Frick, 937-215-6602.

- **Mennonite.net**, a leading web site and application service provider to the Mennonite churches of North America, is seeking a full-time ***creative director and webmaster***. This is a highly visible role in our organization, with ultimate responsibility for our "end product." The ideal candidate will bring experience in developing web sites, including a strong familiarity with graphic design and writing.

  To apply, submit a letter, resume and references to Barth Hague, Executive Director, Mennonite.net, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; <barth.hague@mma-online.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has open positions for 2001-2002 school year: ***Family/consumer sciences:*** 75% position; family/consumer science 6, 7, 8, human development, food science and nutrition, sewing and housing/interior decorating. ***Natural science:*** Full-time; includes earth science 9, physical science 8. Applicants should be able to demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith in classroom and commitment to Mennonite Church confession of faith.

  Fax resume to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528, or call 540-432-4502 for more information.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** is seeking a ***registrar*** to work at 80% time beginning June 2001. Responsibilities include maintaining all academic records, handling admission of students, managing class schedules and registration, advising international students on immigration issues and organizing commencement. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred), familiarity with higher education systems, strong skills in administration with attention to detail, and knowledge of database management.

  To apply, send a letter of application, curriculum vitae and three references to Loren L. Johns, Academic Dean, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; <ljohns@ambs.edu>. For more information, see <www.ambs.edu/jobpostings.htm>. Women, people of color and members of other under-represented groups are especially encouraged to apply.

- **Sunnyside Nursing Home** seeks qualified staff who have a passion for working with the elderly. The Christian retirement community, Mennonite-sponsored, has a 60-bed skilled nursing facility, 23 assisted-care units and 226 of independent living in the beautiful Sunnyside Village campus in sunny Sarasota, Fla.

  RN: Minimum 3 years experience in long-term care supervision for day position (full-time).

  LPN: Charge nurse for day or evening shift (full-time).

  Send letter with resume to Fern Eash, H.R. Director, Sunnyside Village, 5201 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34232; 941-371-2750; email <Ferneash@aol.com>.

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer by J. Philip Newell (Eerdmans, 2000, $16) draws on the spiritual insights and wisdom of the Celtic church. It is lavishly illustrated.

God's Message to You: A Six-Session Guide to the World's Greatest Book by Tim McCracken (CRC Publications, 2000, $29.95) uses a unique question-and-answer format to cover the entire Bible. It includes reproducible handouts and is useful for evangelistic Bible study.

The Mennonites by Larry Towell (2000, $59.95 plus $6 shipping) is a book of photographs of Old Colony Mennonites in Ontario and Mexico by an award-winning photographer. It is available from *Die Mennonitische Post*, Box 1120, Steinbach, MB R0A 2A0, 204-326-6790, <annef@mb.sympatico.ca>.

Spirit of Simplicity, an all-new 40-day guide for Lent, and other resources for Lent and Easter are available from Alternatives for Simple Living, 5312 Morningside Ave., P.O. Box 2787, Sioux City, IA 51106, 800-821-6153, email <Alternatives@SimpleLiving.org>; or visit <www.SimpleLiving.org>.

Getting Home Before Dark by Peter J. Dyck (Herald Press, 2000, $14.99) shares stories and insights from his wealth of experience helping refugees, building peace, challenging audiences and promoting intergenerational family life.

Without Spot or Wrinkle: Reflecting Theologically on the Nature of the Church, edited by Karl Koop and Mary H. Schertz (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2001, $15 plus $3 shipping), is a collection of essays by Mennonite leaders and scholars about the nature of the church, biblical authority, hermeneutics, church polity and discipline.

The Bible: Digging for Treasure (Herald Press, 2001, $159.99) is a vacation Bible school curriculum that helps children become familiar with the Bible and learn why the Bible and its stories are valued and preserved. Order at <www.mph.org/vbs> or call 800-245-7894.

Builder (January) features worship and spirituality resources for Lent, Holy Week and Easter 2001 on the theme "Welcome Home." At the center of this year's Lenten texts, Jesus' story of the return of the prodigal son provides an image for home and for the loving welcome God offers. Order at <www.mph.org/vbs>.

Faith Odyssey: A Journey Through Lent by Richard A. Burridge (Eerdmans, 2001, $15) includes daily readings that combine Scriptures with stories drawn from literature, television and film to illustrate the journey from ashes of sorrow to the joy of Jesus' victory.

Word of Mouth: Creative Ways to Present Scripture by Craig Morton and Ken Hawkley (Faith & Life Press, 2001, $14.95) includes helpful background on the oral tradition behind our Bible and useful tips on how to present Scripture effectively. Call 800-743-2484.

The Robe of God: Reconciliation, the Believers Church Essential by Myron S. Augsburger (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) presents the message that God clothes us, like the prodigal son, in "the robe of righteousness" and gives us a place in God's family. Also, salvation, ethics and love flow from our relation to Jesus Christ.

Compassionate Kids: Helping Kids See Beyond Their Backyard by Jan Johnson (Upper Room Books, 2001, $12) offers practical advice on expanding kids' awareness of the poor and oppressed in the world and in their own communities. Johnson shows parents how to integrate compassion-building activities into everyday life.

Recommended reading

Border Crossings: Christian Trespasses on Popular Culture and Public Affairs by Rodney Clapp (Brazos Press, 2001, $16.99) and *Reel Spirituality: Theology and Film in Dialogue* by Robert K. Johnson (Baker, 2001, $16.99) help us face the power of popular culture. Clapp takes a broader approach and calls upon Christians to "inhabit the whole world—public and private, body and soul—exactly as Christians." His essays are full of insights but become repetitive. Johnson offers perhaps the best Christian perspective on film for the general reader. He writes, "Not only should Christian moviegoers be at times selective, but they must become knowledgeable film viewers as well." Film buffs will find this book especially helpful.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

Steering between grace and truth

The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ—John 1:17

Shortly after turning 18, I was driving my new Chevelle to a New Year's Eve party where some buddies were waiting for me. I was traveling too fast for conditions on the narrow and curvy country road which was slick from a light winter rain. Taking my half out of the middle, I crested a small hill and confronted an oncoming car which also appeared to be in the center of road.

Swerving to give the other car room as it passed, I drove onto the soft mud shoulder. It quickly dragged me into the cut bank. Stones and sticks scraped the side of my new car. I imagined with horror the ugly scratches and dents in my pride and joy. So I steered sharply to the left to escape the abrasions, but went directly across the road and straight into the bank on the other side. At 45 miles an hour I struck a utility pole head on, broke it off at the ground and set it back 10 feet. Fortunately I was wearing a seat belt.

Dazed and with a small cut on my chin, I looked through the shattered windshield. The pole was leaning precariously over my car, held up only by its wires. I was sure the pole would fall on the car and electrocute me, so I jumped out of the car.

Having seen the entire episode in his rearview mirror, the driver of the other car came back to help me. Unfortunately, the driver of the other car was the local policeman. After checking to see that I was OK and calling a tow truck, he gave me a ticket for speeding.

Life as a Christian is not a choice between truth and grace. Faithfulness requires navigation with both.

That experience has provided me with a durable metaphor for more than 30 years. Whenever confronted by crisis or controversy, I begin to imagine polar opposite positions as ditches. Sometimes I even observe that folks are so fearful of oversteering and ending up in the ditch on the other side (which I did) that they deliberately stay in the ditch of their choosing.

Perhaps John was addressing such tendencies when he wrote about Moses and Jesus. Apparently a few early believers were pitting the two against each other. At times we do the same if we pit the New Testament against the Old Testament.

Willard Swartley (page 8) explains in detail why we need both Testaments to consider a matter such as divorce. Swartley notes that we too often consider the matter only from a New Testament point of view and ignore the long sweep of God's intentions through all of Scripture. But God is no different in older Scriptures than in new.

The more difficult lesson, however, comes when considering truth and grace. Finding the creative centerline between these two is challenging. And when in that middle, it can feel like a compromise that has no integrity. How much better it seems to position ourselves solidly with only truth. Or how much more satisfying to claim only grace.

When I am feeling self-righteous about something, I tend to articulate a Jesus of uncompromised truth. My ideas about what others should believe and do are based on the truth that Jesus laid before us. But when I am feeling guilty or ashamed, then I insist on a Jesus of unconditional grace. And when confronted about my sins, I rush to the comfort of a gracious and forgiving God.

The same patterns emerge in our discernment processes throughout the church. When the church exercises its responsibility to set boundaries for us in this era, it feels mean-spirited and legalistic to some of us. When the church responds with an accepting and hospitable heart, others of us feel that the church is losing its convictions.

But grace without truth pulls us into a ditch, just as truth without grace pulls us into the other ditch. After all, life as a Christian is not a choice between truth and grace. Faithfulness requires navigation with both as reference points. Just as we cannot read the Bible with only one Testament, we cannot be healthy as a church if we insist on grace without truth, or truth without grace. This is the gospel that John proclaims: grace and truth came together through Jesus Christ.—*ejt*

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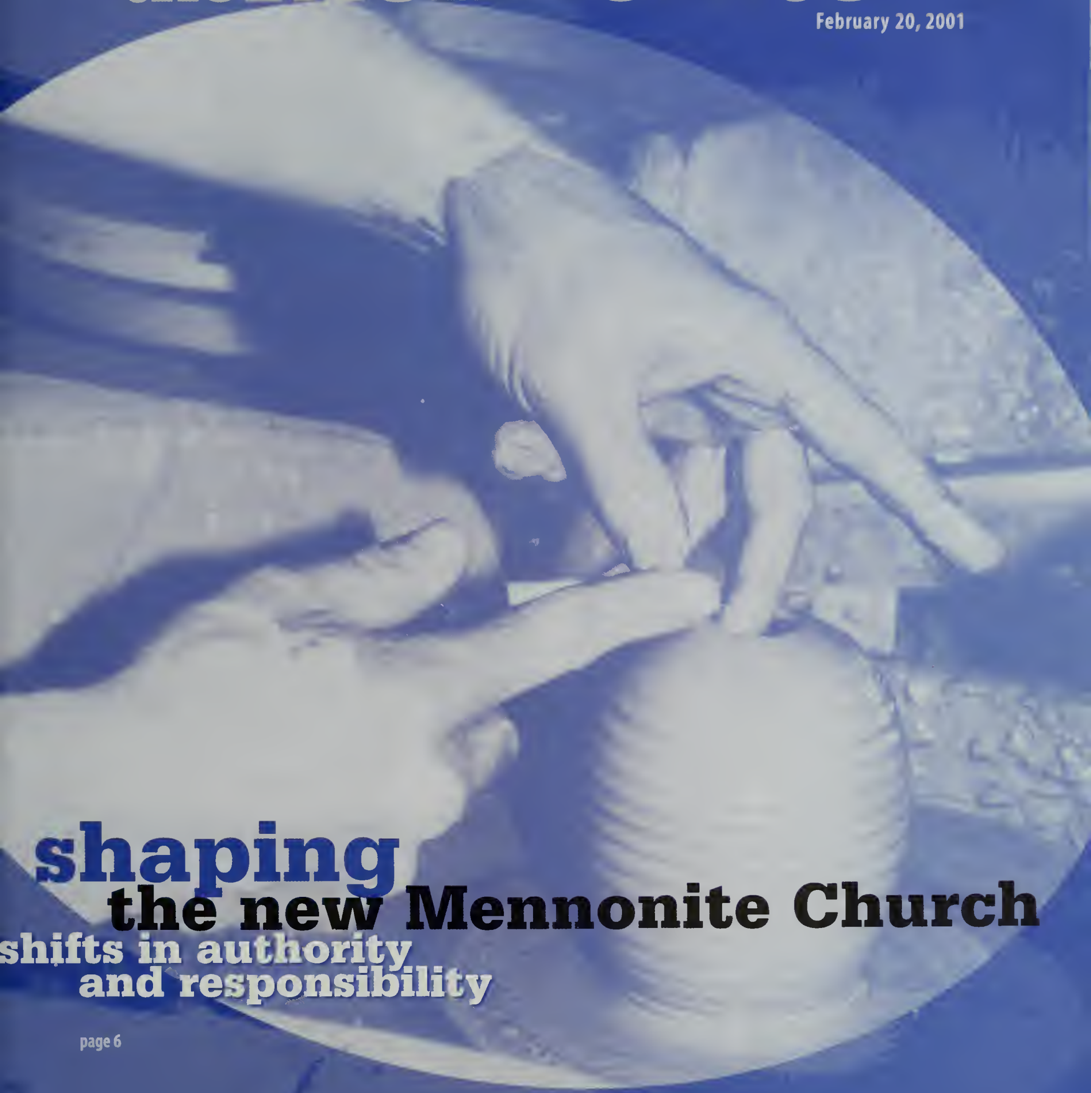
February 20, 2001



shaping the new Mennonite Church

shifts in authority and responsibility

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Schools reflect spirituality

Re "Memo to the Administration" (Jan. 30): I have attended Mennonite Christian schools from second grade until now, my junior year at Bluffton (Ohio) College (I am now studying abroad), and I have found the spiritual emphasis to be prevalent. The spirituality that I encountered was reflected in the words and actions of faculty and staff. I found it to be much more helpful for me in the long run to see teachers and administration throughout elementary, high school and now college demonstrate what it is like to be a Christian through recurring themes such as integrity, accountability, respect and forgiveness. Required Bible classes taught the biblical story and cultural context of Scripture. Chapels included a variety of worship experiences that applied what we learned in our required classes.

The emotional emphasis that was placed on religion in other Bible studies that I attended thoroughly confused me by conditioning me to feel God more than to truly understand God. That emotional foundation made my search for God more difficult and was something that I recently felt I had to overcome. In retrospect, the loving actions and ever-present listening and understanding of the faculty at all three schools that I have attended helped me truly understand what it is to act like Jesus. Those actions were truly powerful, and they have given me the will to continue searching for who God really is in my life.—*Jonathan Moyer, Seville, Spain*

I am a member of Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, Lansdale, Pa., and a member of the chapel committee. The main purpose of chapel is to be a meaningful worship experience. With more than 400 students on our campus, we try our best to vary the chapel services so different students can connect, relate and reflect on what's been presented. Not every chapel has to be deep for a student to take a challenge away from it. That is not to say that the comfort zones of students do not need to be pushed. They do, but it is more important to be genuine, straightforward and easy to understand, rather than impersonal and deep.

This year as a chapel committee, we decided to take a thematic approach. So far we have covered significant issues such as welcoming, commitment, politics, discovering spiritual gifts, combating consumerism, equality and racism, and trust and integrity. Both faculty and students have commented on the meaningful improvement in chapel services this year.

In my own experience, chapel settings and Bible classes have forced me to examine and articulate my belief in Jesus Christ as well as encourage me to live by what I believe. I do not have the right to judge whether every student is touched by every chapel. What is truly important is what is in one's heart, not on how someone worships or the rate at which they mature spiritually. On our campus, relationships are close-knit, and the common bond that draws us all together is faith in Christ. Never have I felt the spiritual nurturing and teaching at Christopher Dock to be unsatisfactory.—*Elizabeth M. Clemmer, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School senior, Lansdale, Pa.*

Convention costs

Deer Creek (Okla.) Mennonite Church will not be represented at this summer's joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in Nashville, Tenn. The reason has nothing to do with membership concerns or any other business matter. It is because of total cost. At the annual congregational business meeting on Jan. 28, the cost of sending delegates to Nashville was discussed at great length. A related matter was also discussed, namely the length of the convention, because each day adds to the cost.

After considerable discussion, a ballot vote was taken on the question, "Should we send someone to Nashville?" The chair made it plain that cost should not be considered in this vote. Nevertheless, the majority voted no. I suspect that cost did enter in. At any rate, Deer Creek will not be represented.

I suggest that convention planners in the future consider the cost to the delegates and the impact this has on small congregations such as ours.—*Paul Isaak, pastor, Deer Creek (Okla.) Mennonite Church*

Role of repentance

The article "Jesus Christ: Warrior and Judge" (Jan. 30) says that Jesus does not forgive unconditionally but only upon repentance. The Gospel accounts of Jesus' life suggest otherwise. The Gospels report four examples of Jesus straightforwardly forgiving someone's sins, and there is little in any of them to suggest prior repentance.

- Mark 2:1-11 (and parallels) records Jesus healing a paralyzed man. Without the man say-

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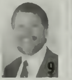
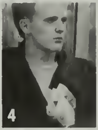
Vol. 4, No. 7, February 20, 2001





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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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ay readers say

ing a word and with no discussion of changes in the man's life, Jesus says to him, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

• Luke 7:36-50 tells the story of the "woman who had lived a sinful life" washing Jesus' feet in the home of a Pharisee. The woman says nothing but only worships Jesus with love. Jesus responds by telling her, "Your sins are forgiven." No evidence of changed morality is presented, although certainly the woman does demonstrate great love for Jesus.

• In the story of Jesus and the woman caught in adultery (John 7:53-8:11), there is no word "forgive," but that's what seems to be going on when Jesus says to her, "Neither do I condemn you." Again, there is no mention of any prior repentance on the part of the forgiven person.

• Finally, Luke 23:34 records Jesus nailed to the cross and praying for his executioners, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Again, there is no evidence of prior repentance.

The only two conditions the Gospels record Jesus putting on forgiveness are that we forgive others (Matthew 6:14-15) and that we not "sin against the Holy Spirit" (Mark 3:28-29). Although the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit is sometimes used as a catch-all for whatever we think is important, Jesus' own practice of forgiving people as he did suggests it does not mean that prior repentance is necessary.

After he had forgiven the woman caught in adultery, Jesus told her to "leave your life of sin" (John 8:11). There is good reason to think Jesus wants people to respond to his unconditional forgiveness with repentance and obedience to his teachings. But to say that he requires those things as conditions of forgiveness conflicts with the accounts we have of his life.—*John Zimmerman, Rocky Ford, Colo.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Say no to self-preservation

A challenge to an assumption of our North American culture

by Jim S. Amstutz

Self-preservation is woven into the very fabric of our North American culture. From national defense policies to the right of the individual to bear arms, we assume that all people have the right, even the obligation, to protect themselves. Caught up in the context of the dominant culture, we are seduced into rationalizing that God must bless self-preservation since so many people can't be wrong.

Any challenge to the assumption of self-preservation inevitably leads to the what-if question. "What would you do if someone broke into your house … ?" You know the rest. John Howard Yoder's book *What Would You Do?* (Herald Press, 1983) takes on this age-old question of self-defense and/or defending the innocent in the event of a personal attack. It is the best resource available on this particular aspect of the biblical peace position. The bottom line is that none of us knows exactly what we would do in that situation, but because we are people of faith, we know what we should do. Envisioning an alternative response is consistent with living a godly life.

If we believe that God will never leave us or forsake us, that the cross of Christ has conquered evil and sin through suffering love and that we have inherited eternal life in Christ, then we are secure as God's beloved.

Jesus: What would Jesus do? Since we confess Jesus as Lord, it is logical to start with his example. Jesus challenges the assumption that self-preservation is God-ordained and the highest moral good. He points to the kernel of wheat that must fall to earth and die in order to bring forth fruit. New life comes from death. He tells his followers that they must lose their life in order to save it. "Pick up your cross and follow me," he says.

If self-preservation was the highest good and if God wanted us to learn from Jesus' example how to take care of ourselves at all costs, then Jesus would have found a way to avoid the cross. The disciples would have fought to defend him from arrest (John 18:36). Either Jesus would have found a way to slip out of Jerusalem unnoticed (flight) or he would have staged an armed rebellion and fought his way out (fight). Instead Jesus chose a third way—face his enemies unarmed and under God's protection.

Jesus shows us by example that when we as people of faith are threatened with death, we are really threatened with resurrection. Resurrection makes all the difference in embracing this third way.

Community: A second challenge to self-preservation is community. Self-preservation by definition is individualistic. It assumes that I must defend myself or that I must defend my loved ones or the innocent. But people of faith are part of a community, the body of Christ. We pray for God's protection upon our loved

We believe that ends and means must be compatible to achieve the desired outcome in human relations at all levels. We believe that, as people of faith, costly discipleship is still worth the price.

ones who travel to places of conflict to do the work of God "on earth as it is in heaven." We take calculated risks to give others a glimpse of the kingdom, since we claim those values as our own.

John Stoner has written about the fact that Christians never question that God saves them from their sins. But rarely do they assume that God also saves them from their enemies: "Our confession is that although we can no more save ourselves from our enemies than we can save ourselves from our sins, God's amazing grace offers to save us from both" (*Letters to American Christians*, Herald Press, 1989).

How literally do we apply Paul's assurance to the Christians in Rome that "nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus"(Romans 8:39)? When I take matters into my own hands, I not only mistrust God, I isolate myself from the community.

Way of life: Our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective reminds us that we are citizens of God's holy nation. Rodney Clapp in *A Peculiar People* (IVP, 1996) writes that the early church was an all-encompassing way of life: "The original Christians, in short, were about creating and sustaining a unique culture—a way of life that would shape character in the image of their God. And they were determined to be a culture, a quite public and political culture, even if it killed them and their children."

Saying no to self-preservation at all costs means saying yes to the promises of God. If we believe that God will never leave us or forsake us, that the cross of Christ has conquered evil and sin through suffering love and that we have inherited eternal life in Christ, then we are secure as God's beloved.

We confess that because of our faith there is no cause that we will kill for, though for the cause of Christ we may surely die. We will not go to war, though we will go into all the world to make disciples and to "serve the least of these" in the name of Christ. We confess that God is at work in our lives and that God goes in front of us, behind us and beside us at all times. We confess that our highest allegiance is to Christ and his kingdom, and that restrains us from pledging our allegiance to anything less.

We believe that ends and means must be compatible to achieve the desired outcome in human relations at all levels. We believe that, as people of faith, costly discipleship is still worth the price. It is time to challenge the assumption of self-preservation because God promises us that we can truly live while threatened with resurrection.

Jim S. Amstutz is pastor of West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

For my nieces and nephews, leaving home

by Michael Martin

It is yours to claim
the world far bigger in name
than father, mother, sister, brother,
but do not exchange one for the other.
Still go, perhaps till you feel yourself lost;
searching for that holy ghost,
then turn home once more
to see what could not be seen before.
Look to the earth
and to those who do not despise it,
or its maker.
Do not by default be only a taker,
but in profligate giving
stumble, one day,
upon the grace of true living.
Take not so much of what
comes unbidden
through wires and waves.
You need not be slaves
to wealth badly bought,
its true cost hidden.
Look more to those
who have lost
their lives by election
and found resurrection.

Michael Martin is a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Guerrero, Mexico.

New Wineskins

Shifts in authority and responsibility for Mennonite Church USA

by Dennis R. Koehn

> No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins.
>
> *—Mark 2:22*

Institutions are like wineskins. They are the containers that carry forward what is good. They educate our children, care for the ill and extend our ministries around the globe.

Today we are creating new institutions for Mennonite Church USA to hold the new wine of vision, community, spirit and mission that God is offering to us. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will authorize them to collect and focus our resources—people, money, technology and information. In this era of individualism and fragmentation, we need resilient institutions where many voices can be heard and blended into one symphony for God. A careful balance of authority and responsibility is important for healthy institutions. We need to understand how authority and responsibility will be distributed in our new vessels for Christian unity, witness and service. In anticipation of working together in new relationships, we need to imagine how these new patterns will feel from various perspectives.

Thinking about change: Former General Conference Mennonite Church members (GCs) will make up about 21 percent of the new Mennonite Church USA. Former Mennonite Church members (MCs) will make up 71 percent. Currently dually affiliated area conferences and congregations will make up the remaining 8 percent. Some former GCs feel anxious about being swallowed up by the overwhelming MC majority in the United States. MCs in the eastern United States may feel anxious that the center of gravity among Mennonites in the United States is moving farther to the west. My reading of West Coast Mennonites is that they are not anxious at all but are impatient: "Integration and transformation are great. Why is the rest of the church so slow to get on board?"

We are starting with two Mennonite groups, and each already contains significant theological, geographic, institutional and cultural diversity. If MCs and GCs split 50-50 on some issue, this means that 87,000 MCs take a step toward the middle and 26,000 GCs take a step toward the middle. Thus the MC movement has a greater impact on the changing character of the U.S. Mennonite presence than the GC movement, although both are important.

Authority and responsibility: Mennonite Church USA will be an organizational system made up of many building blocks. I am using four categories of institutions for these reflections: congregations, area conferences, program agencies and an executive board.

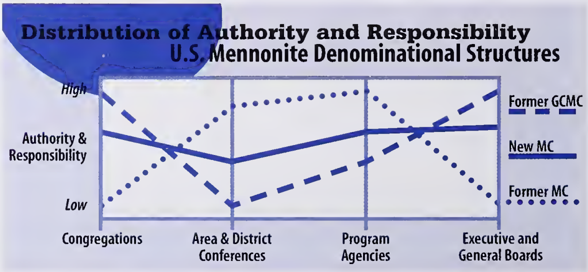
The MC denomination generally has allocated high levels of authority and responsibility to area conferences and program agencies. This left congregations and the MC General Board with relatively low levels of authority and responsibility. The GC denomination has allocated authority and responsibility in just the opposite way. High levels of authority and responsibility were given to congregations and the GC General Board. This left district conferences and program agencies with lower levels of authority and responsibility. Thus the gains and losses in a new balance of authority and responsibility in the new church will be experienced in opposite ways for MCs and GCs. It may take real effort to hear and understand each other on these issues.

Changes for congregations and area conferences: Former MC congregations and former GC district conferences will send delegates to delegate assemblies for the first time. They will have higher levels of influence.

The new delegate assembly with its preponderance of congregational delegates will have an important role of selecting 14 of 20 members of the Executive Board. This is a new and influential role for MC congregations. The previous MC structure had area conferences sending representatives to a General Board.

Former GC congregations will send fewer delegates to delegate assemblies (one per 100 members instead of one per 30) and they will make up about 20 percent of the delegate body. Thus former MC congregations will feel more influential in the delegate assembly, and former GC congregations will feel their influence is diminished.

Former MC area conferences will find that their influence in the delegate assembly and the Executive Board is less than in the past,



Distribution of Authority and Responsibility
U.S. Mennonite Denominational Structures

while former GC district conferences will have a newfound base of influence in the delegate assembly.

However, a new arena of influence for area conferences is the Constituency Leaders Council, which is made up of delegates from area conferences and recognized groups. The CLC will collect a broad base of input from various segments of the church and advise the Executive Board. If it can produce broad-based agreement on policy issues, it will have a strong influence on the Executive Board.

Executive Board and program agencies: In 1999, delegates to the St. Louis assembly affirmed the creation of a leadership board rather than a representative board as a central structure for oversight of the church. Executive Board members are chosen primarily by the delegate assembly of Mennonite Church USA. This new entity will have authority and responsibility for denominational vision, long-range goals and priorities, communications, congregational life, convention planning, ministerial leadership and coordinating resource needs among churchwide programs.

The Executive Board has a demanding leadership mandate from Mennonite Church USA:

- to champion our vision of God's call;
- to be there for all of us; to take care of the whole;
- to make sure all the parts are healthy and working together.

Under Executive Board leadership new relationships throughout the church should unleash new creativity and synergy. The Executive Board will support all parts of the church talking together so that we are more likely to move forward as a unified body.

Different perceptions: Authority and responsibility will be shared more evenly across the institutional structures of the new Mennonite Church USA. MCs and GCs will likely have different perceptions of these shifts as we move into new structures. The "people in the pew" may not feel these changes. But all those who are called and chosen to lead area conferences, program agencies and the Executive Board will feel them.

The end result of U.S. changes will be to have more of the church's resources and decisions directed by congregations. And those resources that are given to the mission of the larger church will be more coordinated by an Executive Board charged with overseeing the good of the entire church. May these new wineskins be settings for dramatic workings of the Holy Spirit and dynamic synergy among Christ's faithful disciples.

Dennis R. Koehn is a management consultant and a member of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

tM asks Mennonite Church USA leaders

Courtesy photo

In this monthly feature, moderator Lee Snyder and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman answer questions about the new denomination. Readers are welcome to submit questions to <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 1-800-790-2498.

Q **What happens if merger fails at Nashville?**

A We anticipate that if the merger attempt fails at Nashville much of the transformation process will continue but without a merging of the membership of the two denominations. Unless the delegates from both denominations act to rescind the actions taken at St. Louis 99, the Executive Board will continue to govern both denominations. The program boards could continue to integrate their activities as they will be outlined in the Nashville delegate workbook.

We trust the discernment of the church in this matter. We are servants of Christ and the church. We are trying to follow the mandate of the delegates at Wichita 95 and St. Louis 99. The process of merger began nearly 20 years ago and will likely continue for some years after a formal vote to merge. We seek the best timing for each remaining step. At Nashville we will ask both groups of delegates whether the timing seems right for a vote on merger. If not, we can extend the process for another couple of years. Even so, we and the rest of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board have a clear sense that Nashville is the time to merge. In the end, the delegates will decide.

Q **What is the role of Mennonite schools in helping transformation?**

A Many Mennonite schools care deeply about the transformation process, since they have a strong stake in the future of the church. Without a close connection to the church, the schools may eventually falter and lose their distinct Christian identity. The transformation process has fostered cooperation among the colleges and seminaries, which are learning from each other and gaining appreciation for the two denominational streams. Some of the schools (particularly Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary) provide a context for emerging leaders from the two merging denominations to build trust with each other that is essential for merger to be successful.

New document on pastoral sexual misconduct corrects pro-accuser bias of 1993 guidelines

> **If someone who comes forward with a complaint … is addressed as a victim, that implies that a determination of wrongdoing has been made.**
>
> *—Elvin Kraybill*

Even something good can get better. In 1993, in the wake of a proliferation of pastoral sexual misconduct cases, discipline guidelines were adopted for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC). Now new guidelines have been adopted following concerns that the original ones were biased against the accused.

The new guidelines were adopted late last year by the GC Committee on the Ministry, MC Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) Leadership Office and Mennonite Church Canada Ministerial Services Office.

The 1993 document was "a very necessary first step," says Dale Stoltzfus, MBCM minister of congregational leadership. "But our experience tells us it needed to be revised and improved."

The greatest revision was in language. The original guidelines repeatedly referred to the person making the accusation of pastoral sexual misconduct as "victim" (now called the "complainant" in the new guidelines). The 1993 guidelines also said, "Because God is a God of justice and compassion, the church must choose to stand with victims of abuse, hearing and honoring their complaints."

That could make an accused pastor wonder if a fair hearing was possible, says Elvin Kraybill, a Lancaster, Pa., attorney and primary author of the new guidelines. "If someone who comes forward with a complaint … is addressed as a victim, that implies that a determination of wrongdoing has been made," he says.

And such an implication of guilt could lead to legal action such as defamation of character suits, argued Kraybill and other members of the Mennonite Lawyers Association. "They felt we were really opening ourselves to a liability exposure or legal exposure," says Keith Harder, director of GC Ministerial Leadership Services.

The 1993 guidelines worked well when the accused individual confessed to the charges, he says. "They did not work so well when the accused contested the accusation," Harder says.

Other changes include eliminating the provision allowing accusers to remain anonymous. Stoltzfus says that courts have ruled that accused people have the right to know who their accusers are. Also, a timetable was added for proceeding once a complaint is made. "Some of these cases dragged on forever," Stoltzfus says.

The new set of guidelines is more focused on procedure than its predecessor, which included sections on credentials, restoration and theological understandings. Those have been removed from the current document.

"You need a clear roadmap in a time of crisis," Kraybill says. "In my opinion, it should be the procedural roadmap without the theological and other rationale."

Not that those components aren't necessary, he says. They will be included in another document, which Stoltzfus is drafting.

The new guidelines have generated concerns that the changes may negatively affect women with pastoral sexual misconduct claims. "Our primary worry is that the legal nature of the document may be off-putting to victims with legitimate grievances and may deter them from bringing charges," says Beth Graybill, director of Mennonite Central Committee's Women's Concerns Desk.

Women's Concerns provided input during the revision process, and some suggestions were included, Graybill says.

Kraybill acknowledges those concerns, but with a clearer focus, it will be more difficult for a pastor to dodge charges of sexual misconduct. For example, he says, eliminating the victim language should prevent accused pastors from arguing that the investigation and discipline process was biased against them.—*Rich Preheim*

College sponsors discussions on race relations

GOSHEN, Ind.—Achieving harmony within diversity is not easy. But that is the goal of a series of Goshen College presentations centered on storytelling. Called "Community Voices," the six presentations are funded by a grant from Indiana Campus Compact.

The first session, titled "Voices From Citizens of African Heritage," was held Feb. 13, with the second scheduled for Feb. 27 on "Voices From the Anglo/European Community." The March 13 presentation will focus on Hispanics, the March 27 session will be on local organizations, and the April 10 event will be on local corporations. The final session, on May 8, will look at the future.

MC associate general secretary appointed to similar post for Mennonite Church USA

NEWTON, Kan.—J. Ron Byler, Mennonite Church (MC) associate general secretary since 1997, has been named associate executive director-designate for the emerging Mennonite Church USA. His new responsibilities will begin in July, immediately following the joint convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Byler will provide the on-site leadership of the Mennonite Church USA office in Elkhart, Ind., formerly the location of the MC General Board office. Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director-designate, will have his office in Newton, Kan., now home of General Conference Mennonite Church headquarters.

Among his duties, Byler will supervise the proposed denominational Executive Board responsibilities of communications, congregational life, conventions, finance, ministerial leadership and racial/ethnic group relations. He will also take staff responsibility for the Leadership Discernment Committee (nominating committee).

"His broad experience in and knowledge of Mennonite Church people and organizations provides greater depth in the executive director's office," Schrag says. "I look forward to our partnership in the task before us."

As MC associate general secretary, Byler's responsibilities included denominational communication efforts. He previously served as director of media relations for the American Friends Service Committee; vice president of Genesis Communications, a communications consulting firm; executive director of the Religious Public Relations Council; and executive producer and English broadcast director of Mennonite Media Ministries.

Byler was a founding member of Sisters & Brothers Inc., a group of Mennonite film and video producers whose work included the film *The Radicals*, about the beginnings of the Anabaptist movement in Europe in the 1500s.

Byler

"Jim Schrag and the Executive Board are providing strong leadership for the formation of the emerging Mennonite Church, and I'm delighted to be a part of that team," Byler says. "I believe that God has wonderful things in store for Mennonite Church USA as we unite our witness and service."

Byler holds a master of arts degree in communication from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., a master of arts and religion degree from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in St. Davids, Pa., and a bachelor of arts in communications from Temple University, Philadelphia, and Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Byler is a member of Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

MCC

Positively presidential

Then-First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton poses with members of Craft Link, an artisans group in Hanoi, Vietnam, which Mennonite Central Committee helped form in 1995. The U.S. president and first lady visited Craft Link during their headline-gathering trip to Vietnam in November 2000. Craft Link sells traditional crafts in Vietnam and exports them to retailers, including Ten Thousand Villages.

Herald Press lists all-time best sellers

Herald Press has released its top 10 list of all-time best-selling books. Not surprisingly, the list is dominated by books about Mennonites and Amish.

1. *The Amish* by John A. Hostetler (published in 1952, 1995): 44 printings, 762,000 copies.
2. *More-With-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre (1976, 2000): 48 printings, 650,000 copies.
3. *Caring Enough to Confront* by David W. Augsburger (1973, 1980, co-published with Regal Books): 45 printings, 545,000 copies.
4. *Meditations for the New Mother* by Helen Good Brenneman (1953, 1985): 49 printings, 520,500 copies.
5. *Mennonite Community Cookbook* by Mary Emma Showalter (1950): 40 printings, 427,000 copies.
6. *Rosanna of the Amish* by Joseph W. Yoder (1940, 1973, 1995): 44 printings, 410,000 copies.
7. *Favorite Family Recipes* by Mary Emma Showalter (1972): 17 printings, 253,400 copies.
8. *Meditations for the Expectant Mother* by Helen Good Brenneman (1968, 1985): 33 printings, 231,000 copies.
9. *Amish Cooking* by a committee of Amish women (1982, 1992): 12 printings, 225,000 copies.
10. *Ellie* by Mary Christner Borntrager (1988): 19 printings, 150,000 copies.

Paraguay day-care center 'second home'

MCC-supported ministry benefits poor single mothers

> Each of these mothers and children has unbelievable barriers to overcome, and having a safe place for the mothers to bring their children is a start.
>
> *—Kristi Enns*

ASUNCION, Paraguay—Neri Noemi Ramirez was not sure how much longer she could support her family. The 29-year-old single mother worked all day and had no one to care for her four children. Desperate, she left 7-year-old Roset in charge of her younger siblings.

Then a neighbor connected Ramirez with Emanuel Day Care. The project of the Paraguayan Mennonite Christlicher Dienst service program, which receives funding from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Global Family program, is a haven for about 100 children. The parents, mostly single mothers, pay only a nominal fee for the center's services.

Ramirez's story is like that of many Paraguayan women, who often bear the brunt of grinding poverty and heavy family responsibilities. Ramirez and her children live in a 10 foot by 15 foot wooden shack along railway tracks. When the children first came to the day-care center, 10-month-old Micaela was malnourished and sickly. Now more than a year later, Micaela is one of the chubbiest babies at the center, and her siblings are also benefiting from nutritious food, daily milk and new friends.

Most important, Ramirez has found a supportive community. She now attends Emmanuel Mennonite Church and has found new life in Christ. When she was in the hospital with tuberculosis for several months, staff from the day-care center visited and prayed with her.

"You are the only ones I can talk to," Ramirez says to the center's staff. "My kids know that they belong here; it's their second home."

Wilfrido Castillo takes his 21-month-old daughter, Micaela (third from left) and her half siblings to Emanuel Daycare, a Mennonite Central Committee-supported ministry in Asunción, Paraguay.

Micaela's father helps support his daughter through his construction job. When he has money left over, he helps support the other Ramirez children as well.

Ramirez's older children participate in the center's newest program, homework assistance for school-age children. Funds from Global Family, MCC's sponsorship program for children's education, go mostly to this effort.

MCC also provides workers for the day-care center through Serving and Learning Together, a one-year service program for young people. SALT volunteer Kristi Enns works with 4- and 5-year-olds at the center. She says she is both saddened by the poverty most of the children live in and impressed by the mothers' efforts to maintain a clean appearance and their struggle for their children's future.

"If I had to sum up what I have learned from these children and their mothers, I would say I see courage," Enns says. "Each of these mothers and children has unbelievable barriers to overcome, and having a safe place for the mothers to bring their children is a start."
—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service

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2000 a record breaker for Choice Books

Year's sales eclipse 1999 mark by nearly half a million

Choice Books last year sold more than 3.4 million books, setting a new sales record for the 38-year-old inter-Anabaptist book evangelism ministry. The record surpassed the 1999 sales total by nearly half a million books.

"It's a team effort of many persons who once again did a fantastic piece of work," says board chair Norman G. Shenk.

Choice Books staff added more than 400 displays in 2000, increasing the total to almost 5,000 in airports, stores, travel centers, hospitals and military bases. That included expansion into more Paradies airport gift shops, increasing from eight displays to 65. Choice Books was a finalist for Paradies Corporate's Best Service Vendor Award.

"Being honored in this way affirms Choice Books' commitment to blending ministry focus with quality business practices as we work to fulfill our mission of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ in the secular marketplace through inspiring and wholesome reading materials," says John M. Bomberger, Choice Books director. "Books sold on airport displays impact a significant number of people worldwide considering that many books are sold to international travelers."

Choice Books has 165 displays in 87 U.S. airports.

Choice Books' highest volume account in 2000 was at Miami International Airport, selling 30,434 books from 15 displays. Top volume accounts in other categories were:

- Independent supermarket: Shady Maple, East Earl, Pa., 1,463 books sold;
- Supermarket chain: Publix No. 503, Atlanta, 5,622 books sold;
- Hospital gift shop: Methodist Hospital Gift Shop, Indianapolis, 3,579 books sold;
- Mass merchandise store: Wal-Mart No. 1893, Bowie, Md., 19,443 books sold;
- General merchandise store: Lehman's Hardware, Kidron, Ohio, 8,786 books sold;
- Travel center store: Flying J No. 500250, Ehrenberg, Ariz., 1,668 books sold;
- Restaurant: Das Essenhaus, Middlebury, Ind., 9,638 books sold.

Choice Books, with headquarters in Harrisonburg, Va., operates through a network of eight distributors and 24 district offices.

Correction: A photo in the Feb. 6 issue misidentified Wayne Sneary and Ken Roth. Sneary is on the right and Roth on the left.

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"Too often books on church planting focus on the 'how,' with little attention to the 'why' and the 'what.' Stuart Murray, on the other hand, contextualizes church planting within a theology of the mission of God and the kingdom of God. He is to be commended for looking at church planting in a post-Christendom context."—*Lois Barrett, Commission on Home Ministries, General Conference Mennonite Church*

Herald
Press

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this date in Mennonite history

Feb. 20, 1937—Residents of the Fernheim Colony in the Paraguayan Chaco organize the League of German Mennonites in Paraguay to promote their ethnic identity.

MCC sending $400,000, workers to El Salvador

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee is committing $400,000 and a shipment of material resources for relief and housing reconstruction in El Salvador following the Jan. 13 earthquake there. Two MCC alumni will coordinate the response, which will also include North American Work and Learn teams as early as May.

About $350,000 will go to housing reconstruction, the focus of MCC's long-term response. The quake left 10 percent of the population homeless. MCC plans to rebuild 200 to 300 homes over two years. MCC is also inviting eight to 10 Work and Learn teams to donate time and labor to help rebuild. The teams will be limited to eight members and will be scheduled for 10-day to two-week stints.

The remaining $50,000 is going to locally purchased food, water and materials for temporary shelter. Additionally, MCC is organizing a shipment of 350 relief buckets, 1,738 school-health kits, 3,000 comforters and 1,100 pounds of thermal underwear.—*MCC News Service*

Scientists to receive Bethel Young Alumni Award

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Husband and wife scientists will receive Bethel College's 2001 Young Alumni Awards Feb. 26. Bonnie Bartel, a 1983 Bethel graduate, and Seiichi P.T. Matsuda, a 1984 graduate, are faculty members at Rice University in Houston.

Bartel, who received her doctorate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been researching how plants use hormones during their development and in response to changes in their environment. Matsuda, who received his doctorate from Harvard Univers ty, has been studying terpenoids, the most numerous and structurally diverse natural chemical compounds.

Discipleship group meets in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia—Twenty-five leaders o discipleship-mission training programs from dozen countries gathered in Jakarta last month for the fourth annual meeting of the Global Discipleship Training Alliance. The meeting focused on peaceable witness amon Muslims.

The alliance includes the YES program of Eastern Mennonite Missions, REACH of Rosedale Mennonite Missions and One Year for Christ of the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia. Since beginning in 1996, the alliance has worked with church bodies in 10 countries to begin discipleship-training programs. Another 15 programs are being explored or developed.

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- **Australia & New Zealand** (February 10-March 4 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
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Events

Bahia Vista Mennonite Church 50th anniversary celebration, April 20-22, featuring former pastors, singing groups, meals, memorabilia and more. For information, contact the church at 4041 Bahia Vista St., Sarasota, FL 34232; 941-377-4041; <Bvmenno@aol.com>.

"Drawing Strength for the Journey," a Connecting Families Weekend, April 20-22, at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pa. For registration information, contact Linda Short, 937-676-3221; <lshorts13@earthlink.net>.

Workers

Gerbrandt, Dave, was installed Jan. 21 as pastor at First Mennonite Church, Clinton, Okla.

Graybill, Dayvid, will complete a pastorate April 20 at Houston Mennonite Church.

Kehrberg, Sarah, has been named assistant editor at Herald Press. As part of her duties she will be managing editor of *Christian Living* magazine.

Yoder, Robert E., Elkhart, Ind., in June will begin as interim conference minister of youth/young adults for Central District and Indiana-Michigan conferences.

Births

Ball, Ethan David, Dec. 28, 2000, to Kevin and Sherri (Yoder) Ball, Poland, Ohio.

Croyle, Katherine Elizabeth, Dec. 11, 2000, to Lisa (Terek) and Scott Croyle, Johnstown, Pa.

Ebersole, Adria Joye, Jan. 22, to Connie and Lee Ebersole, Harrisonburg, Va.

Epp, Jacob Reed, Jan. 20, to Kristy (Friesen) and Matthew Epp, Olathe, Kan.

Orlando, Amaury T., Jan. 18, to Amaury and Veline Orlando, Honduras.

Ramsdell, Joshua Aaron, Jan. 17, to Lori (Barth) and Jack Ramsdell, Lacey, Wash.

Roth, Jaclyn Hope and Jayce Logan (twins), Jan. 21, to Jerry and Wendy (Troyer) Roth, Woodburn, Ore.

Svoboda, Taylinn Jaid, Jan. 31, to Jana (Ratzlaff) and Ryan Svoboda, Omaha, Neb.

Wagler, Alexander John Laverne, Jan. 24, to Reg and Tammy (Kunz) Wagler, New Hamburg, Ont.

Marriages

Clemmer/Souder: Norman Clemmer, Souderton, Pa., and Elaine Souder, Souderton, Jan. 27.

Davis/Yoder: Glenn Davis, Nappanee, Ind., and Georgia Miller Yoder, Goshen, Ind., Jan. 27 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Denault/Greene: Benoit Denault, Canada, and Lori Greene, Holsopple, Pa., Dec. 22, 2000, at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa.

Giesey/Yoder: Stephanie Giesey and Christopher Yoder, Hartville, Ohio, Dec. 16, 2000, at Christ Presbyterian Church, Canton, Ohio.

Gunderson/Hepler: Kurt Gunderson, Edmonton, and April Dawn Hepler, Springs, Pa., Dec. 29, 2000, at Springs Mennonite Church.

Hunsberger/Schmidt: Bryan Hunsberger, Elkhart, Ind., and Larrisa Schmidt, Wakarusa, Ind., Dec. 2, 2000, at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Kempf/Suter: Christina Kempf, Pandora, Ohio, and Thomas Suter, Pandora, Dec. 15, 2000, at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Lamberson/Thomas: Terry Lamberson, Berkeley Springs, W.Va., and Debbie Thomas, Davidsville, Pa., Jan. 27 at Berkeley Springs Presbyterian Church.

Miller/Stutz: Tenille Miller, Kidron, Ohio, and Nathan Stutz, Dalton, Ohio, Dec. 23, 2000, at Amish Door Inn, Wilmot, Ohio.

Deaths

Beiler, Anna, 95, Morgantown, Pa., died Jan. 28. Spouse: Levi Beiler (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Alma Bloss, Vernon, Florence Groff, Vida; 21 grandchildren; 43 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 2.

Boshart, Deloris Stutzman, 70, Milford, Neb., died Jan. 21. Spouse: Burdette Boshart. Parents: Jake and Mary Stutzman (deceased). Other survivors: children Patricia Hostetler, Holly Hostetler, Carla Yeackley, Pamela Wurst, Michael; 10 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 23 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford.

Clemmer, Jacob, 87, Tucson, Ariz., died Jan. 20. Spouse: Martha Lewis Clemmer (deceased). Parents: Allen and Alice Moyer Clemmer (deceased). Survivors: children Jacob Jr., Mildred Bauman, Lorraine Zook, Betty Ann Moyer; nine grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Crossgrove, Cora, 91, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 20. Parents: Charles and Mary Wyse Crossgrove (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 24 at Fairlawn Haven Chapel, Archbold.

Eicher, Merle, 77, Milford, Neb., died Jan. 16 of a heart attack. Spouse: Verba Eicher. Parents: Warren and Anna Eicher (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Susan Roth, Jon; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford.

Fellenbaum, Miriam Keagy, 83, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 26. Spouse: Robert Fellenbaum. Parents: Roy and Elsie Lippy Keagy (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Donald, Kenneth, Patricia; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Masonville Mennonite Church, Washington Boro, Pa.

Gerber, Dwight, 82, Kidron, Ohio, died Jan. 21. Spouse: Melva Gerber. Parents: Rufus and Elizabeth Gerber (deceased). Other survivors: children Julie Gentry, Mike, Sue, Tim; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Gunden, Dean, 45, Pigeon, Mich., died Jan. 24. Spouse: Lori Gunden. Parents: Olin and Joyce Gunden. Other survivors: children Eric, Jana. Funeral: Jan. 27 at Michigan Avenue Mennonite Church, Pigeon.

Gunden, Ralph, 77, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 28, 2000. Spouse: Opal Barkey Gunden. Parents: C. J. and Agnes Albrecht Gunden (deceased). Other survivors: children Elizabeth, Mary Jean, James; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hahn, Willis, 86, Mishawaka, Ind., died Jan. 29. Spouse: (1st) Ethel Marks Hahn (deceased); (2nd) Lois Marks Hahn. Parents: Frank Jr. and Laura Hahn (deceased). Other survivors: children Phyllis Miller, Maynard, Miriam Shaffer; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 1 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Hochstetler, Melvin, 86, Wolford, N.D., died Dec. 11, 2000. Spouse: Goldy Stoll Hochstetler. Parents: Eli and Edna Yoder Hochstetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Melvin Jr., Treva Graber, Trella Kauffman, Sherry Kauffman, Jay, Jonathan, David; 29 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 15 at Lakeview Mennonite Church, Wolford.

Huneryager, Elva Gunden, 88, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 1, 2000. Spouse: Wilbur Huneryager (deceased). Parents: C. J. and Agnes Albrecht Gunden (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Dennis, David; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 5 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

King, Martha, 90, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 21. Parents: Isaac and Katie Stuckey King (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 25 at Millwood Mennonite Church, Gap, Pa.

Krabill, Marion, 89, Louisville, Ohio, died Jan. 25. Spouse: Elva Mast Krabill (deceased). Parents: Aaron and Mary Schmucker Krabill (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Marilyn Herris, Elvin; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 28 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Martin, Roy, 75, Minot, N.D., died Dec. 29, 2000, of cancer. Spouse: Alice (Kropf) Martin. Parents: Earl and Edna Yoder Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Darlene Dintaman, Maxine, Marilyn Shetler, Marjorie Weaver, Ron, Galen; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Bible Fellowship Church of the Mennonite Brethren, Minot.

Nafziger, Earl, 85, Pettisville, Ohio, died Jan. 26. Spouse: Blanche Wyse Nafziger. Parents Charley and Melinda Rufenacht Nafziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice, Rachel Lindsay, Rhoda Schrag, Charles, Ralph, Ellis, Joseph, Emerson, Verlin, Robert, Roger, John; 19 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Nissley, Bonita, 55, Billings, Mont., died Jan. 11. Parents: Rudolph and Mary Nissley. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Red Top Mennonite Church, Bloomfield, Mont.

Peters, Leona Ratzlaff, 64, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 24. Spouse: Hilmer Peters (deceased). Parents: B. A. and Marie Kliewer Ratzlaff (deceased). Survivors: children Lorie Regier, Sherri Prieb, Todd, Jodi Fuehrer; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 27 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Raber, Clara Jennings, 96, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 22. Spouse: Frank Raber (deceased). Parents: William and Ann Good Jennings (deceased). Survivors: children Ann, Chester, Merrill; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 27 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Roth, Erna Christner, 92, Wayland, Iowa, died Jan. 18. Spouse: Jesse Roth (deceased). Parents: Christian and Emma Conrad Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Arnold, Charles, Arline Neff Roth, Ruth Ridenour, Mary; 23 grandchildren; 45 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Smucker, Orrin, 92, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 28, 2000. Spouse: Blanche Hillman Smucker. Parents: Simon and Lydia Ann Wenger Smucker (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Ann Roth, Carolynn Underwood, Ronald, Richard, Ralph; 14 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has one opening for ***single person*** for a one-year voluntary service assignment beginning May 1.

  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Ephrata Mennonite School** seeks a ***K-9 music teacher*** for the 2001-2002 school year. This is a half-time position, but could be full-time with other teaching assignments.

  Interested people should contact David Sauder, 598 Stevens Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-738-4266; email <dsauder@ephms.com>.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is looking for a full-time ***youth pastor*** to work primarily with junior and senior youth.

  For more information or to apply, contact Youth Pastor Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-862-2595; fax 219-862-2178; email <ycmc@juno.com>.

- **Tel Hai Retirement Community**, Honey Brook, Pa., seeks a ***CEO***. Requirements include Christian commitment, endorsement of Mennonite values, 5 years senior leadership experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <info@mhsonline.org>.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center in southern Michigan, is looking for a ***food service manager*** starting ASAP. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Check Amigo out at <www.amigocentre.org>.

  Contact Dana L. Sommers at 616-651-2811 or <dana@amigocentre.org>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp** seeks ***executive director and program director***. BBC is a small Mennonite camp nestled in the Green Mountains of Plymouth, Vt. The camp has a mission focus with many outdoor and nature-oriented programs. These positions will be available August 2001.

  Please send a resume and letter of interest to Regina Beidler, P.O. Box 124, Randolph Center, VT 05061. Other questions and inquiries can be directed to <bbeidler@quest-net.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Fort Wayne, Ind., a diverse urban congregation, seeks a full-time ***pastor*** who will join us in our newfound vision and structure, which incorporates a lay ministry team. We seek a person whose gifts include preaching, administration, intergenerational people skills and experience in cross-cultural settings.

  Contact Lamar Yoder, 219-456-1750; email <ldyoder@aol.com>.

- **Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society** seeks ***director:*** Administrative skills to lead 2,900-member organization and nine-member staff, oversee publicity and public relations, promote educational activities, execute fund raising. Applicant must endorse values of Mennonite Church USA, lead many-faceted ministry to diverse constituency, have organizational development and management skills plus strong communication and relational skills.

  Inquiries, resumes to Noah Hershey, 8875 North Moscow Road, Parkesburg, PA 19365; 717-442-4629.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing-care retirement community with Franconia Mennonite Conference, seeks a full-time ***chaplain*** to provide spiritual leadership and care for its residents. Preferred candidates will have experience as a Mennonite-Anabaptist chaplain or pastor, M.Div. or equivalent and CPE training.

  Send resume before March 9 to Chaplain Search Committee, Rockhill Mennonite Community, 3250 State Rd., Sellersville, PA 18960; fax 215-257-7390; email <gschlicher@rmcomm.org>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a fair trade/nonprofit organization working with artisans in developing countries, is currently recruiting for a ***customer service supervisor*** in our Akron, Pa., office. This individual must have experience and/or training in customer service and sales along with good public relations skills. Excellent interpersonal skills along with effective oral and written communication skills required. Immediate start date possible.

  To apply, please fax resume with cover letter to 717-859-2622, attn. Sherrie Ober; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a fair trade/nonprofit organization working with artisans in developing countries, is currently recruiting for an ***assistant warehouse manager*** near our headquarters in Akron, Pa. Supervision and previous warehouse experience required. Organization and attention to detail are of the utmost importance. Experience with a warehouse management system helpful.

  To apply, please fax resume with cover letter to 717-859-2622, attn. Sherrie Ober; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has open positions for 2001-2002 school year: ***Family/consumer sciences:*** 75% position; family/consumer science 6, 7, 8, human development, food science and nutrition, sewing and housing/interior decorating. ***Natural science:*** Full-time; includes earth science 9, physical science 8. Applicants should be able to demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith in classroom and commitment to Mennonite Church Confession of Faith.

  Fax resume to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528, or call 540-432-4502 for more information.

Help provide the magazine to church leaders in other countries.

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Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking a field trainer to provide training and support to agents (MMA counselors) who are in their first two years of tenure. These agents are located in the Pennsylvania and Mid-Atlantic regions; position will likely be located in the Lititz, Pennsylvania regional office.

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Fax: 219 537-6635
hr@mma-online.org

by Gordon Houser

Thomas Merton is an important Christian figure of the 20th century. Born in France in 1915, he later came to the United States, converted to Catholicism and joined a Trappist monastery in Kentucky in 1941.

From there he wrote many books. His autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, became a best-seller. He became widely known and influential to many spiritual seekers far beyond the Catholic Church. He died in Bangkok in 1968, 27 years to the day after he entered the monastery (the Abbey of Gethsemani).

Hundreds of books have been written by and about Merton, and they keep coming. The past few years have seen the publication of seven volumes of his personal journals, which Merton had asked not to be published until 25 years after his death.

For those readers not wishing to work through those thousands of pages, Patrick Hart and Jonathan Montaldo have edited those volumes into one book, *The Intimate Merton: His Life from His Journals* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1999, $28). This is an excellent source for getting acquainted with this saintly monk who never saw himself as a saint. Rawer, more honest and less organized than his autobiography, which ends with his entrance into Gethsemani, *The Intimate Merton* begins with entries from 1939 and ends two days before he died from accidental electrocution.

Another recent book, *Thomas Merton: Essential Writings* (Orbis, 2000, $14), includes selections from Merton's huge corpus and an introduction by Christine M. Bochen. She divides the brief selections into three categories: "A Call to Contemplation," "A Call to Compassion" and "A Call to Unity." This short book gives readers a taste of Merton's writings that will likely lead them to feast further.

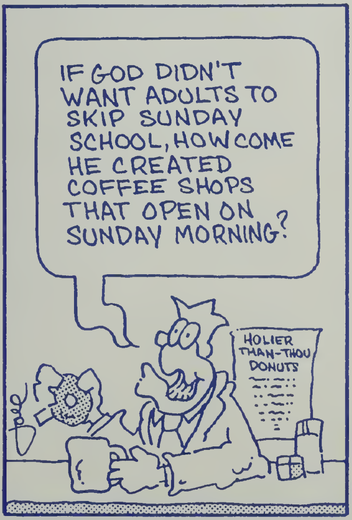
One of the better recent books on Merton is *Thomas Merton & the Monastic Vision* by Lawrence S. Cunningham (Eerdmans, 1999, $16). While many try to make Merton in their own image or focus on him as a writer, poet, prophet or scholar, Cunningham writes that "one simply cannot understand Thomas Merton if one does not understand him as a monk." This may seem to put him at a further remove from most people, but it really helps us understand better a complex man.

Cunningham writes in a clear style and gets to the heart of what Merton sought as a monk, a deeper relationship with God. He writes, "Merton took the ancient vocabulary of monasticism … and interiorized them; he then spoke that ancient language in a new and clear way to the people of this age."

Merton is one of three figures discussed in *Journeys into Emptiness: Dōgen, Merton, Jung and the Quest for Transformation* by Robert Jingen Gunn (Paulist Press, 2000, $19.95). Gunn uses depth psychology to explore how Merton experienced emptiness, used that on his path of transformation and helped others on a similar path.

Christine Bochen writes, "Merton's way of being a Christian and a monk, a mystic and a prophet, touched the lives of countless people." I am one of those people.

Pontius' Puddle


IF GOD DIDN'T WANT ADULTS TO SKIP SUNDAY SCHOOL, HOW COME HE CREATED COFFEE SHOPS THAT OPEN ON SUNDAY MORNING?
HOLIER THAN-THOU DONUTS
Joel
© Joel Kauffmann

From our readers: Occasionally one may search for the wisdom of perspective rather than the wisdom that probes. *Morning Sun on a White Piano* by Robin R. Meyers (Galilee, 2000, $9.95) is that. He gives 12 prescriptions for "a life that is simple without being simplistic, and sacramental without being doctrinaire." These take the reader from the value of pets and the lost art of conversation to "eating books" and a religion of mercy. "Throw away any religion that circles the wagons and makes you meaner, and replace it with one that makes you more merciful." This book beckoned me to rekindle practices I dropped in my too-full life. *—Jim Jantzen, Newton, Kan.*

books

Faith Odyssey: A Journey Through Lent by Richard A. Burridge (Eerdmans, 2001, $15) takes readers through Lent (which begins Feb. 28), combining reflections on Scripture and elements of popular culture. His unique approach offers some good insights and will appeal especially to Baby Boomers.

films

Chocolat (PG-13) is a fable set in a French village in 1959, pitting love and pleasure against a stern Christianity. It's a delightful, well-acted piece, but the good-gal-bad-guy setup is too predictable.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (PG-13) is mesmerizing. Set in 17th-century China, it combines drama, humor, a feminist perspective, beautiful landscapes and magically choreographed fight scenes. This heroic tale, in Mandarin with English subtitles, also has spiritual overtones. It's a unique film.

O Brother, Where Art Thou? (PG-13) is loosely based on Homer's *Odyssey*. Three convicts escape a Mississippi prison road gang in the 1930s. A comedy, the film includes religious images and text, plus a wonderful soundtrack.

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Everett J. Thomas

The new wineskins polity

Polity is the form or structure of any organized unit. The word is related to both "politics" and "police." Every group has some kind of polity, whether or not its members can describe it. Sometimes the actual polity is different from what is stated publicly. A whimsical example from an unknown source hangs in one church leader's office:

Which way did they go?
How many were there?
How fast were they going?
I must find them
I am their leader!

The polity of this wayward group lodges authority and responsibility with the followers, not with the leader. Polity determines where authority and responsibility are lodged.

The Mennonite asked Dennis Koehn, a management consultant, to analyze the polity which is emerging for the new Mennonite Church in the United States. His "new wineskins" assessment (page 6) shows that a new polity will mean changes for every element of church life—congregations, area conferences and denominational boards. The end result is a distribution of authority and responsibility that is balanced across Mennonite Church USA structures.

The change that affects the most members, of course, is the new place for congregations in the proposed structure. Those changes will be subtle at first. Literature in church mailboxes will come from agencies with new names and new faces. Offerings may be sent to new addresses.

A new polity will mean changes for every element of church life—congregations, area conferences and denominational boards.

But the long-term effect will be significant. Current systems will be transformed into a new one.

For Mennonite Church (MC) congregations, the new structure will mean sending delegates to biennial assemblies, where they will help direct churchwide agencies and vote on denominational statements. Area conferences will still send delegates, but having congregational delegates alongside conference representatives will alter the relationship between congregation and conference. As Koehn's chart demonstrates (page 6), MC area conferences will have less authority and responsibility in the new system.

For General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) congregations, the new polity will expand the role of the area conference, giving increased responsibility and authority to the area conference of which each congregation is a member. For those who cherish the congregationalism that has been part of the GC tradition, such a change may be unwelcome and viewed as encroachment on congregational autonomy.

Significant changes are in the offing for other levels of denominational life as well. Those accustomed to the GC structure will discover that more responsibility and autonomy will be vested in the churchwide agencies (mission, higher education, publishing, mutual aid) than is the case in the current commissions structure. Those accustomed to the MC structure already find that the new Executive Board carries much more authority and power than was the case with the former Mennonite Church's General Board.

These changes are good. The new polity adjusts both old systems and provides a balance among the four elements. However, no polity will ensure that a group will flourish. Ultimately, the church thrives when those in the structures function with confidence and integrity. The church, which is more an organism than an organization, needs leaders whose relationships with each other are honest and trusting.

Both denominations, GC and MC, bring traditions of leadership excellence to the new Mennonite Church USA. Both have leaders who have functioned with integrity and strength within their respective polities. If Mennonite Church USA emerges as proposed, then a new leadership polity will also emerge, and leaders from both traditions will need to make significant adjustments.

This too is transformation.—*ejt*

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theMennonite
February 27, 2001

tanding against racism

page 6

6 Spiritually grounded anti-racism
10 Church membership dips 1 percent
11 MBM receives record gift
20 Safe at first

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The union label

"Mennonites and Unions" and "A Mennonite View of Labor Relations" (Feb. 6) presented many items for thought. As a member of the Philadelphia Association of School Administrators, I was grateful for the support of the group. When a decision was made in the mid-1980s to join the Teamsters, I voiced my concerns to the PASA president about labor union impact on professional service. He assured me that there would be no change in our function as professionals.

In my many years as district health supervisor for the Philadelphia school district, I found that labor demands to assure justice for members included (1) a documented search for truth, (2) communication, written and verbal, and (3) open files (no secrets among those involved in a problem). As a PASA member emeritus and Teamster emeritus, I have found little evidence of these valuable requirements among Mennonite businesspeople and local Mennonite churches.

A search for truth cannot be successful and may lead to extreme injustice, abuse, victimization and betrayal of trust if based solely on business input. When I received a complaint from nurses or principals, I immediately contacted the person who was the object of the complaint for a perception of the complaint. Most people appreciated the opportunity to respond; some did not. The direct approach many times resulted in resolution rather than a lawsuit or referral for action. The code of silence—when no one will search for truth—can empower a deceptive business to swindle innocent clients and should not be tolerated.

Documentation required extensive conferences, observation and discussion but was necessary to ensure justice for the accused. When valid questions are not answered or discussion encouraged, justice is denied.

My collection of true stories of victimization indicates that the Mennonite church needs to remove blinders and return to assuring justice for members and businesspeople. I still have some reservations about being a member of the Teamsters. But I must admit that I found a desire for justice for members in spite of violent coercion. I pray that the Mennonite church may return to justice, love, honesty and integrity, and peaceful resolution of differences by prohibiting lawsuits rather than supporting them, as outlined in "A Mennonite View of Labor Relations."—*F. Arline Zimmerman, New Holland, Pa.*

Thanks for "Mennonites and Unions." Power can be both a blessing and a curse. Wherever power is involved it can be misused. Power by definition contains the element of coercion. Every employer, every supervisor has it available to them.

I have both walked the picket line and been an employer. My preference also is to not need to work with unions. However, my five years as a production worker at Gerber Baby Food gave me a sense for the vulnerability most employees feel that was impossible to receive from my bachelor's degree in psychology and master's degree in human resources. I remember one hot summer afternoon when the temperature in the workroom climbed above 120 degrees. The employees had been asking for fans. Management said they couldn't find any. The machine operators decided to shut down their machines and walk out until the situation could be resolved. We picketed the front office that afternoon. By the next morning, fans had been installed and everyone went back to work.

Many Mennonite businesspeople work hard and with success at treating those they hire as people and not as another material of production. But the fact remains that the employer has power, and the individual employee's power is insignificant by comparison. Fair action in the past may predict fair actions in the future but does not guarantee it. To avoid employees feeling a need to organize, to reduce individual vulnerability, the employer may need to publicly commit to "A Mennonite View of Labor Relations" (a very good statement) and also to a legally binding arbitration process, with the employer covering the cost. —*Nelson Waybill, Harrisonburg, V*a.

I found "Mennonites and Unions" misleading and deplorable. Not only was nothing mentioned concerning biblical resolutions where examples of employee-employer relations were devious, not one scriptural position was cited to explain how they were corrected. This article hints at compromise as the only solution for the conscience-weary and does not in any way assist the union laborer to stand fast to a biblical position.

I have been with the same company for more than 12 years, four of which have been in a union labor environment. I have been verbally and emotionally battered as well as physically assaulted more than once for my faith based upon the Scriptures that dictate my unwillingness to yield to the union. I work with these

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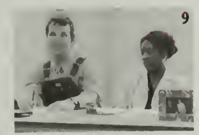
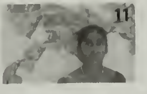
Vol. 4, No. 8, February 27, 2001





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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

same folks every day and treat these heavy-handed union loyalists as friends. For as Christ forgave me, so I forgave them. Justice? Hardly. Justice is not the answer, as this article tries to project. If it were the way to salvation, we would still be under the law. I believe we sin when we take justice and make it our message instead of aknowledging it as an attribute of our relationship to Christ.

A union demands one thing—to be your god. It is not enough for a union to get your dues money, they must have your devout loyalty as well. Any labor union without membership loyalty is a failure at best, for it has no ability to intimidate, threaten or suffocate others to achieve its goal. You may as well forget what is written concerning giving allegiances, taking oaths, being a member of secret organizations and doing business behind closed doors.

I find this article avoiding critical truth as presented in the Bible and offering a compromise to force a social, let's-all-get-along gospel. It not only does a disservice but also promotes a widespread denial of the conscience of every Christ-centered employee working in a union environment. Furthermore, it promotes a position from the Mennonite church, a name this magazine has blatantly misused, one whose roots are in nonconformity and nonresistance according to the gospel of Jesus Christ.—*John Zook, first officer, Continental Airlines, East Waterford, Pa.*

I want to say thank you for including the statements of Sam Nance ("We Think It Was a Good Move," Feb. 6). Also thank you for printing "A Mennonite View of Labor Relations." I especially like the sentence, "The biblical ethic of love calls for service rather than exploitation and domination."—*Chris Wickey, Engadine, Mich.*

The [Chavez] incident highlights tensions between the requirements of this world and those of God's realm.

—Rich Preheim, Editorial, Jan. 30

Politics of personal destruction

I wouldn't praise Linda Chavez very highly if I were you (Editorial, Jan. 23). We in Maryland are very familiar with Chavez as she ran for the U.S. Senate in 1986. It was the country's first Senate contest between two women. Chavez distinguished herself by all but calling her opponent a lesbian. It didn't work, and Maryland fairly rallied around Barbara Mikulski, who trounced Chavez and is still in office. When Chavez decried the "politics of personal destruction" after her withdrawal as a nominee for Secretary of Labor, I couldn't help but think that she was particularly vicious in utilizing the politics of personal destruction to advance her career.

In addition, I believe the withdrawal of the current administration's support for her appointment as Secretary of Labor had nothing to do with her supposed compassion but because she was less than forthright about the details of this supposed display of compassion. *—Paul R. Schlitz, Baltimore*

Building racial bridges

I would like to comment on "Fake Latinos" by Tobin Miller Shearer (Jan. 9) and the responses. It seems to me that, as is so often the case, various sides are right. Affirming such could better build the bridges we desperately need as we face many divisive issues in our church.

I saw Readers Say writers addressing different topics. One had to do with people who have lived in a variety of locations and are the richer for it (Miriam Martin, Jan. 23). One was left somewhat unsure as to her own cultural identity (Gabrielle Plenert, Jan. 30). Jeremy Nafziger (Feb. 6) raised another topic when he rejected the idea of lumping together "white people" in generalities; Shearer had done some of this.

As I heard Shearer, he was raising another, more basic fact (and took off from there in some arguable ways): Life is fundamentally different in the United States for people of color than it is for those of us with Caucasian features. The statement, "Being white is not having to think about being white" reminds me of this fundamental difference. People of color are reminded of their skin color daily, while others of us only need to pay attention to issues of race when we choose to. I can see white privilege—those benefits I get because of my skin color that others don't get. I can work with people of color, but I can't really be one of them because U.S. society sees and reacts to my skin color and features differently.

So I would affirm that many of us do have experiences in various cultures that broaden our horizons and confuse our national loyalties. Generalities are hard to hear when they are made about a group of people we are part of. And yet people of color in the United States still face day-to-day issues that the rest of us can only learn about with sensitivity and patient listening.

"Fake" is a red-flag word and one that I think got in the way of Shearer's message. But I also see him as playing more of a prophetic role, and many prophets have not been strong in the warm fuzzies department.*—Anne Meyer Byler, Goshen, Ind.*

Still on school spirituality

Re "Memo to the Administration" (Jan. 30): I have been a student, parent of students and supporter of five Mennonite Church schools, and I have heard in those schools many vibrant testimonies to Christian faith. I don't see the article as a criticism of church schools (or author Rich Lindberg's school) as much as an observation by a church school graduate (his alma mater could take credit for graduating a student with these spiritual concerns) and a challenge to church school administrators and teachers to be more forthright in their testimonies. We all can benefit from challenges such as this.*—Rachel Nafziger Hartzler, Goshen, Ind.*

Where credit is due

I just finished reading again the book *His Name Was John* about the pioneer Mennonite evangelist John S. Coffman. He was instrumental in starting programs so churches would grow. He was concerned about the young people and saw the need for Bible teaching. Sunday schools were also started in this era. Now 150 years later, I see us going back to conditions as they were when Coffman started. I see a disinterest in Sunday school. Many Sunday evening meetings are canceled, singing schools nonexistent, evangelistic meetings almost gone.

John S. Coffman gave his life for the beginning of these activities. I give much credit to his wife, too, who gave birth to seven children and had the sole responsibility of caring for them while John was gone for weeks and sometimes months at a time. May God bless ministers' wives.*—Florence Voegtlin, Tofield, Alta.*

Give us this day our daily bread

by Shirley Bustos

Peripheral vision

Having decided that humor
is the best weapon
to combat the atrocities
of daily living,
when I take seriously
the responsibility
of being responsibly human,
it may be prudent
to suddenly commit
the childlike outrage
of lying on the floor
to giggle at angels
dancing on the ceiling.

Martha syndrome

The task of baking
an apple pie
becomes a holy ritual.
Always perform the sacred act
of ceremonial hand washing
before proceeding to slice away
the crimson peels.
"Take and eat" is the command issued
to guests gathered around my table,
extended to its maximum length.

Mary syndrome

There is seemingly no time
to chase dust balls
floating under the bed,
lurking in every corner
of my house with hardwood floors.
Remembering that I
am merely dust
gives me a healthy respect
for my counterpart
and I shiver at the gruesome thought
of being unceremoniously inhaled
into the contaminated lung
of the upright vacuum cleaner.

Gathering

Sitting in a warm church
on a hard pew
one cold Sunday morning,
I accidentally peek
during the "every head bowed
and every eye closed" segment
to see Ralph Walters digging
for ear wax.
Marcia Martin's tag
is showing at the neckline
of her plaid dress.
Glancing downward,
dry coffee stains at the hem
of my gray wool skirt
affront my vision.
I press my eyes closed,
totally absolved
of the holier than thou attitude
that could so resolutely
creep into my wandering mind
on such an earthy occasion
as worship.

Shirley Bustos lives in Valparaiso, Ind.

Spiritually grounded anti-racism

Damascus Road founders reflect on its history and its future.

by Rachel Beth Miller

Since its inception more than five years ago, Damascus Road has challenged the Mennonite community to confront racism. More than 35 institution-based teams have participated in the anti-racism project's training sessions.

With plans to expand training at the congregational level, Damascus Road will also experience a transition in leadership. Two of the anti-racism project founders, Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Tobin Miller Shearer, stepped down Feb. 20 from being co-coordinators.

MCC photo

In a letter to the Damascus Road Anti-Racism Table steering committee and core training team, Regina and Tobin emphasized that they came to their decisions separately.

"We're humbled and awed by the strength and vibrancy present throughout the Damascus Road network," they added.

In addition to the steering committee and institution-based teams, the Damascus Road program includes a regular newsletter, eight core trainers and team organizer Conrad Moore. Damascus Road is part of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. Peace and Justice program.

As they prepare to move on, Tobin and Regina have reflected on Damascus Road's history.

When they met in 1993, Regina was an MCC staff associate for urban peacemaking in Cleveland. Tobin was working with race issues in New Orleans.

"I was interested in having the church be more accessible to me, my family, my congregation," says Regina, who is African-American. "I would go to [church institution] meetings and wonder, Why are there so few people who look like me?"

Along with nine other people, she and Tobin planned "Restoring Our Sight," a conference in 1995 for Mennonite church people interested in race issues.

"We were overwhelmed," says Maggie De Leon, who helped plan the event and now is part of the Damascus Road Anti-Racism Table. "We were expecting about 50 people, and 250 showed up."

Building on ideas from the conference, a task force came up with the idea for a model in which a group from within an institution would be trained to "dismantle racism." Through analysis and discussion, these team members would confront racism on a personal and systematic level, then prepare a plan to address racism within their institutions.

From the beginning, the Damascus Road model was powerful and at times controversial. Some participants resisted the emphasis on racism as a structural force or training session activities that divided participants into caucuses of white people and people of color.

In that setting, Tobin says, "You've got the potential for a training to explode every time."

Painful realities: He and Regina say that they, too, have faced painful realities in the sessions. For example, Tobin says, they have learned to combat group dynamics that automatically shift authority to a white male leader no matter who is actually in charge.

In order to address attitudes so deeply ingrained, Regina says, "it takes partnerships of white people and people of color. People really have to work together."

The results of Damascus Road's work have been felt throughout the church. The nature of the teams, which must be balanced in race and gender, bring together people who might not ordinarily work together.

Linda Bontreger, a member of Goshen (Ind.) College's team, says: "In hearing the personal stories that were shared, racism no longer pertained to someone else. I now identi-

> **It takes partnerships of white people and people of color. People really have to work together.**
>
> *—Regina Shands Stoltzfus*

fied racism with faces, names and woundedness that gave the term 'racist' an entirely new identity in my mind."

J. Ron Byler, executive director designate of Mennonite Church USA, says the new church structure has anti-racist language in its bylaws, guidelines for including people of color at all levels and a vision and goals for itself as an anti-racist institution.

"It is unlikely any of this would have happened without the persistent voice of the Damascus Road program calling the church to change," he says.

Bible-based: The Damascus Road model has evolved over the years to become more specifically Anabaptist and Bible-based. It recently ended its contract with Crossroads, a similar anti-racist project whose members had assisted Damascus Road with training sessions.

"We felt a real urgency that the process be spiritually grounded, that the framework for dismantling racism would be biblical rather than having a secular framework draped with Bible verses," says Conrad.

Participants have responded positively to the changes, and Tobin and Regina are optimistic about Damascus Road's potential. The vision for the future includes more emphasis on training at the congregational level.

Linda says, "Bringing people from diverse backgrounds into the church will backfire if we only open the doors to the church house and fail to open our minds and our hearts to what the Holy Spirit has to say about the relationships [God] has intended for us to share with our diverse brothers and sisters in Christ."

'Internalized oppression': A new branch of the Damascus Road tree will focus on "internalized racist oppression" in people of color.

"This is when people of color believe the things racism says," Regina explains. "If [people] believe [they] are inferior, then this gets manifested in how people carry themselves, family systems, how parents approach the schools."

The new co-coordinators for Damascus Road are Conrad Moore and Brenda Zook Friesen. Tobin and Regina will continue in a limited training and consultation role through 2001.

Regina plans to continue her seminary studies and pastoral responsibilities at Lee Heights Community Church in Cleveland as well as her role as vice chair of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. Her decision was partly prompted by a desire to spend more time with her family.

Tobin's plans are unclear, although he plans to continue writing. He, Regina and Iris De Leon-Hartshorn, MCC Peace and Justice Ministries director, will soon release a co-authored book on race issues.

MCC photo

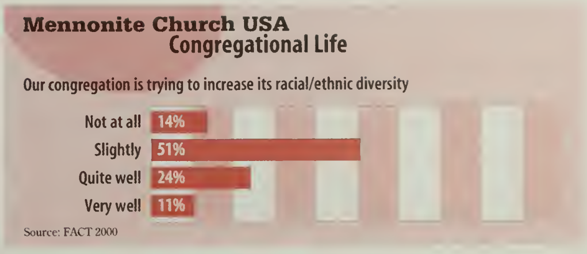
You've got the potential for a training to explode every time.

—Tobin Miller Shearer

"Just as God called us into this work together, God is calling both of us to lay it down," Stoltzus says. "I am confident that it will be picked up by capable hands."

Rachel Beth Miller is a writer for Mennonite Central Committee.

Mennonite Church USA
Congregational Life



Source: FACT 2000

The challenge of merging cultures

Two interracial couples speak about their marriages.

by Jodee Shaw

Two interracial couples from Goshen, Ind., speaking Jan. 15 at Goshen College in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, said their relationships have had their challenges but that in the long run they feel their lives have been enhanced by the merging of two cultures.

Michele Fanfair-Steury, director of student services at Goshen, and Paul Steury, an education coordinator, along with Pat McFarlane, assistant professor of education, and her husband Art McFarlane, an account manager and copywriter, spoke on "Interracial Dating: Sugar & Spice. Is it all that nice? You decide!" The Steurys, who met in Bloomington, Ind., have been married for eight months. They said the biggest challenge they have faced as an interracial couple is where to make their home.

Paul Steury had applied for a job in Minnesota that he was excited about, but when he asked the prospective employers about racial attitudes there, he decided against it. "You have to think about where you're going to be and if it's safe for your family," he said.

Michele said she likes it in Goshen, but she doesn't feel entirely at home in the predominantly white community. "We haven't yet found a place where we both feel 100 percent that we belong," she said.

> **Mennonites like to talk about peace and justice as if they invented the idea, but when it came to treating somebody like an equal, they didn't have a clue.** —*Art McFarlane*

The McFarlanes said home has also been one of their biggest challenges. Art McFarlane expected to encounter some racism when he moved from his native Jamaica to Pennsylvania to marry Pat 25 years ago. He said he didn't expect some of the worst offenders to be from the church. "I found the people in church were not quite as accepting as we expected," he said. "Mennonites like to talk about peace and justice as if they invented the idea, but when it came to treating somebody like an equal, they didn't have a clue. They're not willing to look across the table and see someone as their equal."

Art said his family suffered financially because of racism, eventually prompting them to move to California, where multiculturalism is more accepted. He said he had to move his family to find healing. "I didn't want to fight racism all my life." When they decided from California to move to Indiana, they'd already established a positive identity for their two children, the McFarlanes said. They added that an important part of feeling at home in Goshen has been seeking out friends who would affirm, not question, their relationship.

Art, who once worked for the Mennonite church, said, "I promised my family I would not work for the church again. It's not about God or Jesus. It's the people in the church. It's about Christian people who just don't get it."

Merging cultures: Both couples agreed that merging their cultures has benefited them as individuals. Paul said he's beginning to appreciate different styles of music, fashion and even expression. He said while Mennonites are traditionally passive-aggressive, his wife's family is quite loud. "They know how to express themselves," he said. "I'm learning to see that as a healthy thing."

Pat said her children have received a gift she would never exchange. "You can't put a price tag on the kind of multicultural experience my kids have had," she said. Art added, "We look at it as a mixture of cultures. Not that one is better than the other but that they both have good things to offer." Another of the challenges faced by interracial couples is being noticed and often talked about wherever they go. Pat said she wasn't used to so much attention. "A good Menno girl," initially she did not respond to people's rude comments. She has since learned to be more assertive.

But part of staying sane in the relationship has led the McFarlanes to choose their battles. For instance, Pat said she no longer bothers to respond when local waitresses automatically ask her and Art if they want separate checks. "I've learned not to make a big deal out of it," she said, adding that they were never asked that question in California. "I find it interesting. It's just not worth fighting over."

The Goshen News

Hopefully ignorance will not be bliss: Paul Steury and Michele Fanfair-Steury

"I am willing to fight about integrity," Art said. "You just have to choose the right time. I can't afford to have myself and my family humiliated."

One-on-one: Both couples agreed the best way to fight racism is to talk to people from other cultures one-on-one. Paul said an acquaintance gave him a magazine article that questioned if interracial marriages are biblical. "I introduced her to Michele," he said of his response. "Hopefully ignorance will not be bliss," he said. "Getting to know people, regardless of their color, is the way to get rid of racism."

Art said he believes general attitudes have gotten better over the years, attributing it to education and to more people traveling these days and meeting people from other cultures. "Once we meet someone who's real, we see that that person is just like us," he said. "You find there is a lot more uniting you than dividing you. Then there is no room left for racism."

But there is still a long way to go, the McFarlanes cautioned. "There still is a lot of racism in society," Pat said. "Since it has gone underground, it is simply harder to detect and to respond to."

Jodee Shaw is a staff writer for the Goshen *(Ind.)* News, *from which this article is adapted and reprinted with permission.*

Getting to know people, regardless of their color, is the way to get rid of racism.

—Paul Steury

Membership in new denomination dips

17 of 28 area conferences report decrease in numbers

The emerging new Mennonite Church started 2001 with 156,125 members in the United States and Canada, a loss of 2,333 or about 1 percent from last year, according to recently released figures. The General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada had 158,458 members a year ago.

Mennonite Church USA has 120,021 members in 1,064 congregations, while Mennonite Church Canada has 36,104 members in 251 congregations.

Also decreasing was the number of congregations, from 1,341 to 1,312. The 2001 figures are taken from the new *Mennonite Directory 2001,* published by Faith & Life Resources, a division of Mennonite Publishing House.

Seventeen of the 28 U.S. and Canadian area conferences reported fewer members this year than last, and two conferences remained at the same level.

In the United States, Eastern District Conference suffered the biggest loss. Membership plummeted 21.5 percent as three congregations of more than 300 people each withdrew in the wake of a failed attempt last year to keep the conference from joining Mennonite Church USA. Overall, the conference lost 982 members; 2001 membership stands at 3,581.

Central District Conference membership fell 8 percent since a year ago, down 526 members to 6,002. But the drop is not as bad as it may appear. Four Iowa congregations, with a combined membership of 480, transferred to the new Central Plains Conference, created last year by the merger of Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District conferences.

Virginia Conference, meanwhile, posted the greatest gain in the United States, adding 1,129 members to reach 9,996. The second largest increase was in North Central Conference, which saw its membership go up by 47 to 435. North Central remains the smallest conference.

Two of the six Canadian conferences reported membership increases: Northwest Conference increased 211 members to 1,399, and Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada increased 145 to 14,075. The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, which is struggling with issues related to homosexuality, lost 627 members over the past year, and now stands at 1,347.

Lancaster, which last year saw a withdrawal of 16 congregations to form a new independent conference, remains the largest area conference, with 210 congregations and 18,678 members. That is down from 220 congregations and 19,005 members in 2000. The second largest conference is Indiana-Michigan with 85 congregations and 11,249 members, down from 89 and 11,717 last year.

The largest congregation remains Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Va., with 1,672 members. It is one of five North American congregations with more than 1,000 members. Sixty-two congregations reported no members. U.S. and Canadian congregations average 119 members, with a median membership of 75.

Not included in the new denomination's membership totals is the General Conference Mennonite Church's South American Conference, which has 3,556 members in 12 congregations.—*Rich Preheim*

Largest U.S. congregations

1. Calvary Community Church, Hampton, Va.—1,672
2. Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb. —1,140
3. First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.—1,085
4. College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.—1,063
5. Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.—705

Largest Canadian congregations

1. First Mennonite Church, Winnipeg—1,280
2. Winkler (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church—802
3. Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg—587
4. St. Catharines (Ont.) United Mennonite Church —543
5. North Leamington United Mennonite Church, Leamington, Ont.—506

Area conferences with greatest changes in membership

Decreases

Conference	2001 total	Change from 2000
Eastern District	3,581	-982
Alberta	1,347	-627
Central District	6,002	-526
Indiana-Michigan	11,249	-468
Lancaster	18,678	-327

Increases

Conference	2001 total	Change from 2000
Virginia	9,996	+1,129
Northwest	1,399	+211
Eastern Canada	14,075	+145
North Central	435	+47
Rocky Mountain	1,234	+36

Artisans safe after Indian earthquake

AKRON, Pa.—Nearly two weeks after the Jan. 26 earthquake that devastated western India's Gujarat State, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers found the 300 members of a Ten Thousand Villages artisan group unharmed, although some of their homes were damaged.

Ten Thousand Villages staff had worried about the artisans of St. Mary's, a Catholic organization in Ahmadabad, the largest city in Gujarat hit by the quake. Attempts to contact the women were futile until a three-member MCC team arrived in the city on Feb. 7.

The team included Naomi Beach, a buyer for Ten Thousand Villages in Akron, Pa.; David Gerber, MCC India country co-representative; and Julius Devadasan, project officer in charge of material resources in Calcutta. They described Ahmadabad as "full and bustling" and said the St. Mary's building was only slightly damaged, although cracks in the plaster will need to be filled before summer rains begin.

Ten Thousand Villages purchases embroidered items from St. Mary's such as pillow covers, tablecloths and wall hangings. Most of St. Mary's artisans have been able to continue working from their homes.

A small number of the artisans have not been so fortunate, reported Gerber. "One woman named Susila showed up at St. Mary's [on Feb. 7] for the first time since the earthquake," he said. "She seemed to still be in shock but was able to make it there."

The MCC team drove to the five-story apartment building where Susila lived. The structure was standing but showed signs of irreparable damage and will need to be torn down. "There are cracks everywhere, and people who lived there have all gone," Gerber said.

MCC photo by Naomi Beach

St. Mary's artisan Susila stands in front of cracked wall of her apartment building in Ahmadabad. The building will have to be demolished as a result of the Jan. 26 earthquake that rocked western India.

Susila and her husband, who is a day laborer, have been staying with her parents since the earthquake.

While natural disasters affect both rich and poor, many poor families in Ahmadabad escaped the worst damage. Most buildings that collapsed in the city were newer, multistory homes and apartment buildings only wealthier families can afford.

"It is very clear these buildings collapsed due to poor construction," said Beach, adding that local newspapers and magazines are full of complaints of builder fraud.

The Hindu caste system has also complicated relief work, MCC workers said. Although outlawed by the government in the 1950s, it still permeates the country. Some upper-caste families have been reluctant to accept help from anyone of a lower caste, Gerber said.

MCC has provided $330,000 to rural families affected by the earthquake. Most of the money will go toward reconstruction efforts administered by CASA, the relief and development organization of the Indian Council of Churches.—*Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

$1 million gift is largest ever to MBM

ELKHART, Ind.—A check for more than $1 million arrived at Mennonite Board of Missions' headquarters in Elkhart on Feb. 7, the largest gift received by MBM in its 119 years. It came from the estate of Molalla, Ore., businessman and farmer Ivan Kropf, who died in 1999 at the age of 92.

"This gift arrived as a strong reassurance that among Mennonites there is still alive a vision for what God might do in fresh ways through us in a new century of mission," said MBM president Stanley Green.

Kropf started in the lumber business in the 1930s near Molalla, working for his uncle. He soon built his own sawmill, and from there expanded his operation to include a second sawmill and lumberyard in Oakridge, Ore., and a lumberyard in Hesston, Kan.

Kropf believed that "if God blessed him, he should give back generously to the work of the kingdom," says his daughter, Claudia Lapp.

The Kropf gift was undesignated and will be placed in a fund from which MBM takes a percentage for each year's operating budget. "Obviously such gifts are a tremendous help," says MBM development manager Cal King.

Kropf was also a strong supporter of Mennonite education, contributing significantly to Western Mennonite School in Salem, Ore., and Hesston (Kan.) College, where Kropf Center is named in his honor.—*John D. Yoder of MBM News Service*

> **If God blessed him, he should give back generously to the work of the kingdom.**
>
> —*Claudia Lapp*

From EMU classroom to Somali cabinet

Khadija Ossobleh Ali is applying her Eastern Mennonite University education at the highest levels—the new government of her native Somalia.

Ali is a 2000 graduate of the Harrisonburg, Va., school's Conflict Transformation Program. Since December 2000, she has been Somalia's minister of state for national reconciliation. The embattled country had not had a central government for the past decade.

"My task in the new government is indeed a difficult one," Ali says. "Reconciling a divided society is not easy, but I hope with the help of God, we will have the courage to take this difficult journey of life."

Principal of the matter

Barbara Moses (center), principal of Philadelphia Mennonite High School, speaks during the annual meeting of principals of Mennonite Secondary Education Council schools. Fourteen principals met Feb. 8-10 at Bluffton (Ohio) College to discuss restorative discipline.

Three honored for North American work

ELKHART, Ind.—Longtime workers among Hispanic and Native populations have been named recipients of Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) 2001 James and Rowena Lark Award, recognizing work in evangelism and church development in North America. Lester Hershey of Fort Ashby, W.Va., will receive his award at the Allegheny Conference annual assembly in July. Liz and Wally Detweiler of Morson, Ont., will be honored at North Central Conference's annual assembly in June.

After assisting in relief efforts in Spain from 1938 to 1940, Hershey went to Chicago with MBM, working among Hispanics in the city from 1940 to 1947. In 1945 he became the first MBM Voluntary Service director in Chicago, helping lead to the founding of Bethel Mennonite Church. Hershey worked closely with the Spanish-speaking and African-American communities. He also worked with James and Rowena Lark, the first African-American bishop in the Mennonite Church and his wife, who are the namesakes of the Lark Award. The Larks were active in urban ministries in several U.S. cities.

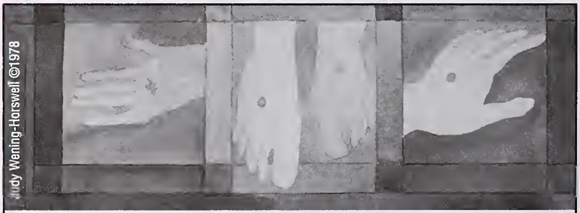
In 1947, Hershey moved to Puerto Rico, where he pastored, gave leadership to church development and worked with the Luz y Verdad Spanish radio ministry. He retired in 1979.

Since then, Hershey has returned to minister in Puerto Rico and Mexico and has held several interim pastorates in the United States, including currently at Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church.

The Detweilers have provided leadership to Morson Community Bible Fellowship and the United Native Ministries Council. The couple met in 1964, when Wally, an Iowa native, went to Morson to help with a series of revival-style prayer meetings. Liz, an Ojibwa from Morson, became a Christian at one of the prayer meetings. They were married in 1965 and settled in Morson.

The Detweilers have carried major responsibility in the development of Morson Community Bible Fellowship, and Wally became lead pastor in 1996. Liz is vice president of the United Native Ministries Council, of which Morson Community Bible Fellowship is a member.

Church work is only part of the Detweilers' ministry. Through adoption and foster care, Wally and Liz have kept Ojibwa and Cree children in the community. In addition to three biological children, Wally and Liz have six adopted children and three permanent foster children.—*Joni Sancken of MBM News Service*



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Edmonton celebrates as 2001 City on a Hill

EDMONTON—Members of Edmonton's three Mennonite congregations gathered Feb. 3 in a coffeehouse setting at First Mennonite Church to celebrate being a City on a Hill.

Edmonton was this year's choice of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions for the annual grant of $25,000 from CHM and recognition by both agencies of a vision and plan for holistic urban ministry. MBM will give an additional $5,000 to help the Edmonton City on a Hill committee hire a project coordinator.

Edmonton's plans include five projects:

- Providing a chaplain to Welcome Home Community, which provides a 24-hour supportive community environment for as many as 25 at-risk families with young children;
- A French-African ministry/church plant by Jean-Bosco and Christine Hajabakiga, a Rwandan couple who were involved in evangelism in their home country. Edmonton is home to at least 150 French-Africans.
- Providing a parish nurse to serve both Welcome Home Community and mission outreach fellowships in local Mennonite congregations;
- A children's ministry through Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church. The congregation has an unusual cultural mix of refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia as well as immigrants from China and Hong Kong.
- A potential youth outreach effort being considered by members of First Mennonite Church. The neighborhood surrounding the church has one of the highest percentages of young people in the city.—*Millie Glick for GCMC News Service*

MCC, partner dig deep for Mozambique wells

INKASANE, Mozambique—A new village well in southern Mozambique, funded by Mennonite Central Committee and the Anglican Church of Mozambique, attracts nearly 200 people a day, some arriving at 4 a.m. to draw water.

"We are thankful for the well because we used to have a lot of trouble," says one villager. "Now we have sufficient water, although it sometimes runs out because of so many people."

MCC and the Anglican Church have collaborated on two wells in the area. The wells, which are hand-dug, are 75 feet deep.—*MCC News Service*

GCMC photo by Ed Good

Christine and Jean-Bosco Hajabakiga lead an African-style worship celebration Feb. 3 as part of festivities to kick off Edmonton's year as City on a Hill.

BE

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Spring coming March 7, say Goshen scientists

GOSHEN, Ind.—Ready for spring? A group of Goshen College faculty members and students says it will arrive even sooner than the groundhog said.

Using weather data and the amount of sap collected from a campus maple tree, the group, calling themselves Scientists/Scholars Advocating Precision (SAP), says spring will begin March 7. That's two weeks earlier than the groundhog predicted.

SAP announced its forecast Feb. 16. The group based its prediction on a secret formula measuring the strength of winter (December and January temperature and precipitation figures) against the strength of spring (the amount of sap collected from a campus tree since Feb. 2).

This was the second consecutive year SAP has predicted spring's arrival. Last year, the group announced Feb. 29 as the first day of spring. On that day, temperatures topped 70 degrees, setting local records.

Bluffton College launches new book series

BLUFFTON, Ohio—A new book series on Anabaptist and Mennonite issues was formally launched Feb. 15 at a reception at Bluffton College. The C. Henry Smith Series is sponsored by the college, Mennonite Historical Society and Pandora Press U.S.

The reception spotlighted the first two books in the series: *Anabaptists and Postmodernity,* a collection of papers from a 1998 Bluffton conference and edited by comunication professors Gerald and Susan Biesecker-Mast, and *Anabaptist Theology in the Face of Postmodernity: A Proposal for the Third Millennium* by J. Denny Weaver, Bluffton religion professor and the editor of the series.

The third and fourth volumes of the series have been accepted. The third volume will be about Joseph Yoder, author of *Rosanna of the Amish,* written by Julia Kasdorf. The fourth volume, written by Michael King of Pandora Press U.S., will examine dialogue and conflict.

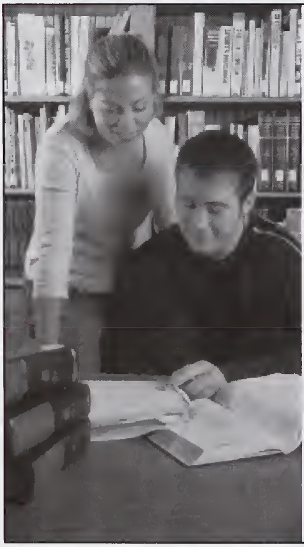
MEDA program crosses racial barriers

TOLEDO, Ohio—It has been a year since Toledo Mennonite Church and Friendship Baptist Church and the Northwest Ohio chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates started the Toledo ASSETS program to train low-income entrepreneurs. Since then, 45 people have graduated from three 13-week cycles.

Director Phil Ebersole likes the partnership with Friendship Baptist Church. "It feels good that we have crossed racial barriers with ASSETS," he says.—*MEDA News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Feb. 27,1695—The Swiss city of Bern orders that Mennonites, as "excommunicated people," cannot be buried in a churchyard "or other customary burial ground."



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Births

Bergey, Laura Jane, Dec. 16, 2000, to Dale and Patricia (Ruth) Bergey, Telford, Pa.

Brown, Axel James Donavin, Dec. 15, 2000, to Dale and Melanie (Burkholder) Brown, Edmonton.

Burkholder, Zoe, Feb. 6, to Lyle Burkholder and Lori Oesch, Topeka, Kan.

Clemens, Katherine Grace, Jan. 12, to Quentin and Rachel Clemens, Westmont, Ill.

Fobert, Shannon Kay, Aug. 19, 2000, received for adoption Dec. 6, 2000, by Jane Fobert, Hubbard, Ore.

Heavner, Claire Elizabeth, Jan. 14, to Jerry and Kathie (Ratliffe) Heavner, Harrisonburg, Va.

Heistand, Madelyn Grace, Feb. 2, to Jeffrey and Pamela (Lehman) Heistand, Manheim, Pa.

Hershberger, Jeremiah Joseph, Jan. 31, to James and Kathy (Mast) Hershberger, Hartville, Ohio.

Hostetler, Allison Nicole, Jan. 29, to Sheila (Bender) and Vince Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.

Immel, Anthony Gordon, Feb. 2, to Katie (Rheinheimer) and Ryan Immel, Orrville, Ohio.

Jordan, Cameron Scott, Feb. 2, to Brendan and Mary Beth (Mast) Jordan, Hartville, Ohio.

Kauffman, Anya Jae, Jan. 17, to Jan (Helmuth) and Jeff Kauffman, Harrisonburg, Va.

King, Greyson Hawk, Jan. 16, to Wendel King and Candace Sauder, Lancaster, Pa.

Klenda, Levi John, Jan. 29, to Brian and Laurel (Peters) Klenda, Omaha, Neb.

Landis, Anna Grace, Dec. 15, 2000, to Alvin and Dawn (Bergey) Landis, Harleysville, Pa.

Miller, Peyton Jay, Jan. 31, to Lynn and Tami (Rutledge) Miller, Pettisville, Ohio.

Porter, Michael Ryan, Feb. 6, to Kimberly (Stoll) and Steve Porter, South Bend, Ind.

Powell, Faith Noel, Jan. 23, to Bruce and Patricia Powell, Newport, Wash.

Rheinheimer, Grace Kathryn, Jan. 11, to Kristan (Biller) and Ron Rheinheimer, Goshen, Ind.

Simonetti, Devon Christopher, Dec. 27, 2000, to Christopher and Victoria (Early) Simonetti, Harrisonburg, Va.

Stoltzfus, Karly Kate, Feb. 2, to Karl Jr. and Laura Stoltzfus, Weyers Cave, Va.

Correction from Feb. 13 issue: Abigail Rebecca Bixler's date of birth was Nov. 7, 1999, and she was received for adoption Nov. 6, 2000, by Amy Bixler, Indianapolis.

Marriages

Moore/Ritchie: David Moore, Mount Jackson, Va., and Tamara Ritchie, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 3 at Mount Jackson United Methodist Church.

Koscher/Taylor: Tim Koscher, Wakarusa, Ind., and Kim Taylor, South Bend, Ind., Jan. 26 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Deaths

Dunham, Geneva Foster, 64, West Liberty, Ohio, died Jan. 26 of complications from diabetes. Spouse: Thomas Dunham. Parents: Milton and Mary Foster (deceased). Other survivors: children Kenneth, Steven; three grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 29 at West Liberty.

Eichorn, Alvin Bruce, 80, Grantsville, Md., died Jan. 27. Spouse: Virginia Leith Eichorn. Parents: Henry and Annie Miller Eichorn (deceased). Other survivors: children Arthur, Leonard, Dwight, Donna Winters, Janet Blocher; 28 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 31 at Grantsville.

Friesen, Peter, 84, Henderson, Neb., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Lucille Friesen. Parents: Peter and Margaret Epp Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Roy, Glen, Treva Rosenthal, Pamela Oetken, Audrey Janzen; 11 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Garber, Thelma Hostetler, 82, Edmonton, died Dec. 21, 2000. Spouse: Joseph Garber (deceased). Parents: Ira and Mary Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children Larry, Elaine Stauffer, Carl, Evan, Allan, Alvin, Susan, Marilyn Rivers-Bowerman, Janet Paran, David; 19 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 27, 2000, at Holyrood Mennonite Church, Edmonton.

Geib, Bertha, 92, Manheim, Pa., died Nov. 8, 2000. Spouse: Elmer Geib (deceased). Survivors: children Harold, Homer, David, Mary Peters, Orpha Peters, Mildred; 17 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 11, 2000, at Hernley Mennonite Church, Manheim.

Good, Roy, 90, Lititz, Pa., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Emma Waltz Good (deceased). Parents: Menno and Luetta Myer Good (deceased). Survivor: son Merle. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Hernley Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.

Goshow, Marvin, 90, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 1. Spouse: Margaret Krout Goshow (deceased). Parents: Abram Goshow and Elizabeth Moyer Goshow Derstein (deceased). Survivors: son Dennis; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 6 at Souderton Mennonite Home.

Hostetler, Troy, 30, Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 30 of injuries in an auto accident. Spouse: Dana Geiman Hostetler. Parents: Garry and Judy Hostetler and Shirley Hjelmstad Hostetler. Other survivor: son Caden. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Hutchinson.

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Hostetter, Irene Mast, 90, Waynesboro, Va., died Feb. 1. Spouse: Amos Hostetter (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Amanda Frye Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Stanley, Warren, Gary, Amos Jr., Anna Day, Doris Gullotta; 14 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Waynesboro.

Johnson, David, 30, Denver, died Jan. 29 of aspiration. Parents: Robert and Myrna Johnson. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakewood, Colo.

Kulp, Elizabeth, 90, La Junta, Colo., died Jan. 25. Parents: Isaac and Lizzie Bergey Kulp (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 30 at East Holbrook Mennonite Church, Cheraw, Colo.

Layman, Pauline Kanagy, 50, Dayton, Va., died Feb. 1. Spouse: Eldon Layman. Parents: Alvin (deceased) and Annie Yoder Kanagy. Memorial service: Feb. 4 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Ramsey, Rosanna Yoder, 41, Hustontown, Pa., died Jan. 30. Spouse: Robert Ramsey. Parents: John Sr. (deceased) and Naomi Yoder Yoder. Funeral: Feb. 2 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Rice, Lester, 78, Columbiana, Ohio, died Feb. 2 of a heart attack. Spouse: Lorraine Wing Rice. Parents: Leo and Emma Blosser Rice (deceased). Other survivors: children Connie Neuenschwander, Deborah Glick, David, Jay; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 6 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Stouffer, Dennis, 54, Boyertown, Pa., died Jan. 31 of a heart problem. Parents: Janus and Anna Stouds Stouffer (deceased). Survivors: children Gerald, Dennis, Treena Boalton, Denise Herbert; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Hereford, Pa.

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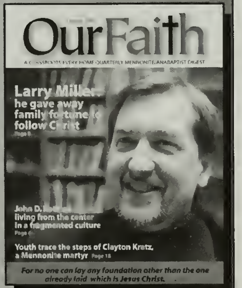
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Youth trace the steps of Clayton Kratz, a Mennonite martyr Page 18
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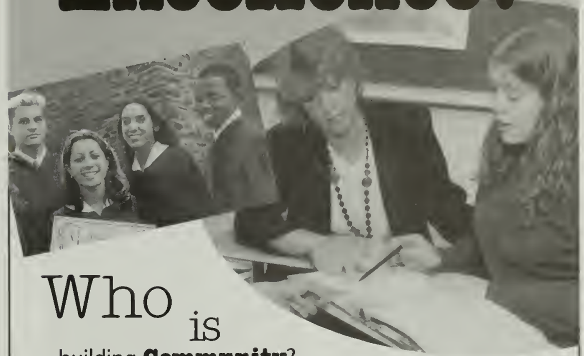

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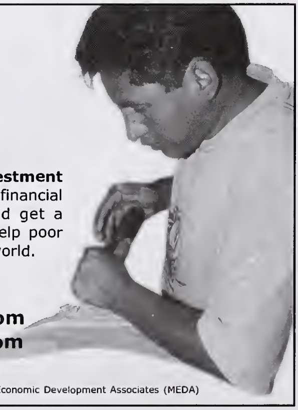

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classifieds

- **Camp Keola**, Huntington Lake, Calif., has ***summer jobs and service opportunities*** from June through Labor Day in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. We need head cook, maintenance, counselors, lifeguards and other positions.

  <www.campkeola.org> or call 559-439-7880.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 urban school, seeks ***assistant principal***. Counseling experience or training in counseling is preferred. Contract begins Aug. 1, 2001.

  For more information, contact Ib Thomsen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Yellow Creek Mennonite Church**, Goshen, Ind., is looking for a full-time ***youth pastor*** to work primarily with junior and senior youth.

  For more information or to apply, contact Youth Pastor Search Committee, Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, 64901 CR 11, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-862-2595; fax 219-862-2178; email <ycmc@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Fort Wayne, Ind., a diverse urban congregation, seeks a full-time ***pastor*** who will join us in our newfound vision and structure, which incorporates a lay ministry team. We seek a person whose gifts include preaching, administration, intergenerational people skills and experience in cross-cultural settings.

  Contact Lamar Yoder, 219-456-1750; email <ldyoder@aol.com>.

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Freeman, S.D., is seeking an ***associate pastor*** to fill a half-time position with an emphasis on family life and youth ministry. Collegiate or seminary pastoral training is preferred but not required.

  Direct inquiries and resumes to Rudy Brockmueller, 28458 - 442nd Ave., Freeman, SD 57029; 605-925-4542; email <brock@gwtc.net>.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center in southern Michigan, is looking for a ***food service manager*** starting ASAP. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Check Amigo out at <www.amigocentre.org>.

  Contact Dana L. Sommers at 616-651-2811 or <dana@amigocentre.org>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp** seeks ***executive director and program director***. BBC is a small Mennonite camp nestled in the Green Mountains of Plymouth, Vt. The camp has a mission focus with many outdoor and nature-oriented programs. These positions will be available August 2001.

  Please send a resume and letter of interest to Regina Beidler, P.O. Box 124, Randolph Center, VT 05061. Other questions and inquiries can be directed to <bbeidler@quest-net.com>.

- **Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society** seeks ***director:*** Administrative skills to lead 2,900-member organization and nine-member staff, oversee publicity and public relations, promote educational activities, execute fund raising. Applicant must endorse values of Mennonite Church USA, lead many-faceted ministry to diverse constituency, have organizational development and management skills plus strong communication and relational skills.

  Inquiries, resumes to Noah Hershey, 8875 North Moscow Road, Parkesburg, PA 19365; 717-442-4629.

- **Rockhill Mennonite Community**, Sellersville, Pa., a continuing-care retirement community with Franconia Mennonite Conference, seeks a full-time ***chaplain*** to provide spiritual leadership and care for its residents. Preferred candidates will have experience as a Mennonite-Anabaptist chaplain or pastor, M.Div. or equivalent and CPE training.

  Send resume before March 9 to Chaplain Search Committee, Rockhill Mennonite Community, 3250 State Rd., Sellersville, PA 18960; fax 215-257-7390; email <gschlicher@rmcomm.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has open positions for 2001-2002 school year: ***Family/consumer sciences:*** 75% position; family/consumer science 6, 7, 8, human development, food science and nutrition, sewing and housing/interior decorating. ***Natural science:*** Full-time; includes earth science 9, physical science 8. Applicants should be able to demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith in classroom and commitment to Mennonite Church Confession of Faith.

  Fax resume to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528, or call 540-432-4502 for more information.

by Rich Preheim

10-year try

For good and for bad, the Brandenburg Gate has long been a symbol of the German city of Berlin. The famous columned gate, which is more than 200 years old, for decades stood in a no-man's land behind the infamous Berlin Wall. But the World Council of Churches recently used the Brandenburg Gate to represent the dream for peace and justice, according to WCC News Service.

A Feb. 4 march through the gate helped launch the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence. "This gate has already witnessed many processions of protest with torches and candles," WCC general secretary Konrad Raiser told the group. "The Brandenburg Gate itself is a symbol that stands for many things: lust for power and violent division, reunification and reconciliation."

The Decade to Overcome Violence calls upon churches to repent of their complicity in violence, work together for peace and act in solidarity with those who struggle for peace and justice. The campaign originated at the WCC's regular assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1998, when Fernando Enns, a German Mennonite, introduced the idea. But a committee rejected sending his proposal to the delegates. In one of the assembly's final plenary sessions, Enns sidestepped procedure and brought his proposal directly to the delegates, who overwhelmingly approved the idea.

The campaign's launch was part of the WCC's Central Committee meeting in Potsdam, Germany, Jan. 29-Feb. 6. Other meeting highlights included a call on Sudan to cease bombing its civilians, registering opposition to the United States' military aid to Colombia, reaffirming that industrialized countries "bear the major moral responsibility for precipitating climate change" and welcoming seven new member churches.

Diagram this sentence

The Observer, magazine of the United Church of Canada, nominates the following as the longest sentence in church history, written in 1770 by settlers in Novia Scotia back to Scotland:

"We the undersigned Elders, Freeholders, and other inhabitants of the Township of Truro in the Province of Nova Scotia in North America, and members of the Presbyterian Congregation, there having been for a long time as sheep without a Shepherd and destitute of any minister of our Lord Jesus Christ to break the Bread of Life and dispense Gospel ordinances amongst us in a fixed way, nothwithstanding of many Essays for obtaining such an invaluable blessing, which in the Holy Providence of God proved ineffectual, taking into our most serious consideration the melancholy circumstances that we and our little ones are in and the great danger of perishing for lack of knowledge, after humbling ourselves before the Lord, and asking His counsel in this so important affair, being fully persuaded from good information and from our own experience, in as far as we are capable to judge of the Piety, Prudence, Literature and other ministerial endowments of you, the Rev. Daniel Cock, of Greencock, Scotland, we do hereby most heartily Call, Beseech and Entreat you, the said Mr. Cock, to come over to us, to be our pastor in the congregation, and to take the pastoral charge and oversight of our Persons and immortal souls as a Watchman upon this Watchtower of Zion Wall and to dispense the Gospel and the solemn ordinances thereof among us."

There was no word whether the candidate accepted the call.

Faith and politics

Conscience magazine offers this religious roll call of the members of the 107th Congress: 150 Catholics, 72 Baptists, 65 Methodists, 49 Presbyterians, 41 Episcopalians, 37 Jews, 29 Protestants without denominational affiliation, 20 Lutherans, 15 Mormons and eight members of the United Church of Christ. Another eight call themselves Christian without any further designation, while six belong to Eastern Orthodox churches. There are five Christian Scientists, four Disciples of Christ, three Assembly of God members, three Seventh-day Adventists, three Unitarian-Universalists and two members each of the Christian Reformed Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Six small denominations have one member each, and seven members report no religious affiliation.

Flushed with success

Here's a church remodeling tip, as found in *The Marketplace:* A village church in Yorkshire, England, had honored one of its early parishioners with a $90,000 stained-glass window. The parishioner was Thomas Crapper, a plumber born in 1836 and inventor of the flush toilet. The window contains "a tastefully rendered silhouette of a toilet."

Tidbits

- A study of major U.S. news outlets showed that stories about "religion, spirituality or values" made up 11 to 20 percent of their coverage.—*Sojourners*
- Cuban Quakers in November 2000 celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first Quaker missionaries to the island.—*Quaker Life*
- France will end military conscription next year, while Italy is scheduled to do so in 2006.—*Reporter for Conscience' Sake*
- The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has declared baptism for the dead a "historical curiosity."—*Saints Herald*

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Everett J. Thomas

Safe at first

A remarkable program called Damascus Road is changing the Mennonite church in North America. Over the past five years, this controversial and powerful effort has challenged leaders and congregations to dismantle racism. If progress in this area can be compared to a baseball game, then Mennonite Church USA has arrived safely at first base. It is now time to figure out how to get to second.

I was trained in the Damascus Road program in 1996; those five intense days were a conversion experience for me. Damascus Road defines racism as race prejudice plus the systemic misuse of power. It demonstrates how most of us white folks swim in waters of white privilege and power, but we do not know it.

Damascus Road also describes a continuum of stages through which an organization can change from being monocultural and exclusive to being truly anti-racist in its multicultural identity. No organization can skip a developmental stage. Therefore, the goal is to develop a strategy that moves the organization to the next stage.

Before we rush off to second base, however, it is right and good to mark the progress we have made in dismantling the structures that perpetuate racism. The Damascus Road project emerged as an influential change-agent just as the new Mennonite Church USA began to form. Consequently, language and assumptions taught through Damascus Road have become part of the proposed bylaws of Mennonite Church USA. For example, Article II declares that one role of Mennonite Church USA is to be anti-racist in all areas of church life and program.

There are people among the churches, organizations and agencies who do not know that their actions ... express a racism too difficult to cure. —*Gilberto Flores*

"Exposure to Damascus Road has helped develop a consciousness of racism in our denomination and in our own lives," explains Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, a congregational leader in Brooklyn, N.Y., and member of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. "It has helped us be more intentional and inclusive of the multicultural needs in the formation of the new church."

We can also celebate the faithfulness of courageous leaders who persevered over the past five years. Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Tobin Miller Shearer (page 6) deserve a great deal of credit for getting us all started on this journey. God worked through Shearer and Stoltzfus; their efforts are transforming some parts of the church.

"The Mennonite church should be commended for allowing this transformation to move the church into the 21st century," says Bishop Leslie Francisco III, also a member of the Executive Board and president of the African-American Mennonite Association. "Damascus Road was a God-inspired idea."

But we are still on first base.

Now we wait for understanding and courage to make the changes that will lead us on as a church. First base is the place of symbolic change. We see ourselves as committed to inclusion of all racial and ethnic peoples but are still relatively unaware of patterns of privilege and control. The Damascus Road continuum describes such organizations as providing symbolic inclusion: We recruit "someone of color" to committees or staff positions, but "not those who make waves."

People of color in our church have been waiting a long time for the changes we are making. Some fear we will stop here.

"Damascus Road has helped us discover that there are people ready to walk the way that leads to no racism," says Gilberto Flores, Hispanic Resource Ministries director for the Commission on Home Ministries. "It has also put in evidence that there are people among the churches, organizations and agencies who do not know that their actions, attitudes and ways to relate socially express a racism too difficult to cure."

The progress we have made in dismantling racism is important, but it is not enough. At first glance, it may seem we are safe. But there is not much value in parking comfortably on first base. Safe at first, we are still a long way from home.—*ejt*

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March 6, 2001

Indonesians Paul Gunawan (left) and Sjakur Ama (see page 4)

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Mennonites reach out in Indonesia

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8 Californian nominated moderator-elect
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16 The wisdom of our elders

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Novel ideas

I find it baffling that Jim Bertsche takes issue with what is not in *The Poisonwood Bible* (Speaking Out, Feb. 6). How can he critique based on what is not present in a novel? This novel is not about the missionaries Bertsche knows, sensitive or otherwise. This novel is not about the rapidly growing African Independent Church movement. This is Barbara Kingsolver's story, not Bertsche's. One may dislike her story, but to propose that she should have somehow included or alluded to many other stories in the novel suggests that Bertsche does not understand the role of the novel or the importance of telling disturbing stories for their own sake.

Is Bertsche suggesting that novels need to inform readers in a general way about a people, a society or a movement lest the reader make hasty conclusions about the setting of the novel? Is he proposing, for instance, that Joseph Conrad in his *Heart of Darkness* ought to have written about someone other than Kurtz so the reader would not conclude that all European colonists in Africa were horrifically destructive? Perhaps Fyodor Dostoevsky should have added yet more pages to his epic novel *The Brothers Karamazov* so as to balance his unsettling story with some reference to the functional family that lived just down the street from the dysfunctional Karamazovs. Maybe Umberto Eco should have spun a story about a different Italian monastery in *The Name of the Rose*, because the way it is now, those of us who have only a marginal acquaintance with the monastics of the Middle Ages are left with a picture of 14th-century Franciscans which is intriguing but less than complimentary.

Good novels beg for more stories to be told and perspectives to be shared. But to discredit the novelist for not telling some sort of "balanced story" of missionaries and the Christian church in Africa is to miss the impact of this particular novel and the novel genre itself. *—Allan Rudy-Froese Kitchener, Ont.*

I thought it important to note that some readers, like me, came away from Kingsolver's work without feeling particularly negative about Christian missionaries. What I did get was a piqued interest in the history of the Congo. Knowing that the book is fictitious, I wondered how accurate Kingsolver's depictions of historical figures and geographical descriptions were, and that inspired me to increase my knowledge of that area.

A couple of themes, aside from those Bertsche pointed out, also jumped out at me. One was the overall misuse of power by the United States and Europe over a country that is not predominantly white, which is a common theme throughout history. The second theme centered around the issue of translation, specifically the recurring incidents of the missionary father proclaiming, "Tata Jesus is bangala!" Depending on which syllable he emphasized, he could be shouting that Jesus was a loving shepherd or a poisonwood plant that caused a horrible rash. Needless to say, his emphasis referred to the latter. But rather than focusing on this man and his failings, I started thinking about how this may apply to the Bible. How, in our humanness, there may have been similar errors made in its translation through the years. Whatever the case, it bears on me the importance of not always taking literally the things I read and hear.*—Vicki Epp, Wichita, Kan.*

Labor talks

The Feb. 6 issue on Mennonites, unions, labor relations and work was disappointing in what it lacked: acknowledgment that work is not a safe subject for conversations among Mennonites. While problems with labor unions and membership are not uniquely urban, that is the setting of which I am most familiar. Mennonites with strong service ethics who are involved in productive, meaningful work—such as medicine, education and social services—get caught in times of strike or work stoppages. And when two people from the same congregation are on opposite sides, relationships can be severed in ways that impact the congregation. Individuals who are struggling with crossing a picket line need a caring community with whom to talk—and I have seen it denied from fellow church members. When I was a new hire at a union-controlled job, I saw the cold, cruel, antagonistic environment that a union can dictate in the workplace. I attempted to talk with others in my congregation, but people just shrugged and said, "That is just the way it is here."

One can argue that given the choice, people would never seek a job in a union workplace. I respect that decision. The reality for me is that I could not live in this high-cost city if I did not bring home union-mandated wages. I enjoy my service-oriented job and am involved in productive, meaningful work. I think about work a lot, and I also think about unions and the way they operate and the fact that some of my

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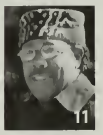
Vol. 4, No. 9, March 6, 2001



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y readers say

money goes there. I don't like it, but it is the best alternative I have. I wish there was a place to really talk about it, and I would like to see *The Mennonite* dig into this issue a little deeper for the sake of those of us who do not have another place for this conversation. *—Sharon Britton Miller, San Francisco*

I was disappointed when I read the Feb. 6 articles on Mennonites and unions to discover not one written from the workers' perspective. It would have been useful to the larger discussion to interview those who must decide to join or not join a union. It seems too easy for the church to frame issues like this in an "us vs. them" fashion. I'm certain there are union members and organizers who identify themselves as Mennonites.*—Gary Olsen-Hasek, Gresham, Oregon*

Not unique

Thank you for the good report on the ministry of Byrdalene and Willis Horst in the Argentine Chaco ("30-Year Mission Veterans Still Building Faith on Spirituality of Indigenous Argentinians," Feb. 6). I wonder, though, why the writer felt a need to contrast the Horsts with "classical stereotypes of missionaries," as if the Horsts' attitudes in mission are quite new and unique. I have personally known most of the missionaries sent by the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions in the last 60 years, people who most certainly would identify with what the Horsts are doing and do not fit the "classical stereotype."

I wish somehow we could learn to rejoice in the wonderful things that are happening today without feeling a need to contrast these with a fictitious stereotype of an insensitive and unenlightened past.*—Robert L. Ramseyer, Bluffton, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Laurie L. Oswald

Answering a different call

Indonesian Mennonites make peace as they follow Christ in a Muslim nation.

by Laurie L. Oswald

The Muslim call to prayer resounds through loudspeakers before dawn. The wailing of religious readings from the Koran calls the faithful to their morning prayers.

A few may answer that call differently from the 90 percent of Indonesians who are Muslim. Christians—about 6 percent of Indonesia's population—may awaken to read Bibles and pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

In a nation torn by political, ethnic and economic conflict, Mennonites deal with the tensions in a variety of ways.

Tulham Prabu, a Mennonite pastor who converted from Islam to Christianity in high school, shows how people of different backgrounds are intertwined in Indonesia.

"I can talk quite easily with Muslim people, and they don't reject me, because they know I am formerly Muslim," says Tulham, pastor of the Mennonite congregation in the village of Welahan in central Java. The church is next door to a Muslim mosque.

"About 97 percent of our neighbors are Muslim," Tulham says. "They are good neighbors. We try to be good neighbors, too."

No matter what one's faith, the same sun dawns on the world's fourth-largest nation (215 million people), where Mennonites are a minority within a minority.

A just-released census by Mennonite World Conference shows that 87,802 baptized Mennonite members live in Indonesia—the fifth-largest group of Mennonites in the world. They belong to three synods, known as GITJ, GKMI and JKI.

As a double minority, a small denomination within a minority faith, they've often suffered persecution. But they've also peacefully coexisted with their Muslim neighbors, along with some Hindus, Buddhists, Javanese animists and mystics.

Indonesian Mennonites are divided into three synods:

- **Gereja Injili Tanah Jawa**, or GITJ, has 48,000 members, 89 congregations and 112 mission churches. Formed in 1940, GITJ has Javanese historical roots and is based primarily in central Java, near the communities of Pati, Kudus and Jepara. In November, it experienced reunification after a split. (See *The Mennonite*, Dec. 5, 2000, p. 12.)
- **Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia**, or GKMI, has 15,200 members, 40 congregations and 100 mission churches. Formed in 1941, GKMI has Chinese historical roots and is based primarily in communities surrounding Mount Muria, a string of volcanic peaks in central Java. PIPKA, its board of missions and charities, plants churches in other islands, such as Kalimantan.
- **Jemaat Kristen Indonesia**, or JKI, has 12,000 members, 41 congregations and 75 mission churches. An offshoot of GKMI, JKI grew out of the charismatic renewal movement of the 1970s. It is based primarily in Indonesia but also has five churches in California and one in Australia.—*Laurie L. Oswald*

Mennonites, mostly Chinese and Javanese , live among Indonesia's 300 ethnic groups across the world's largest archipelago of more than 13,000 islands. Straddling the equator between Southeast Asia and Australia, it stretches for about 3,100 miles, about equal to the distance between Seattle and Miami.

Like Indonesian batik—an ancient art that creates a multicolored design on cloth through a series of hot-wax etchings and dye dippings—the many religions and ethnic groups create a diverse nation.

Mennonites have created their own patterns, designs and colors. The Mennonite presence in Indonesia began when Dutch Mennonites sent a missionary in 1851. Missionaries from North America and Russia, and Indonesian leaders, played key roles in the Mennonite churches' development.

Democracy: Like their Muslim neighbors, Mennonites strive to feed their families, worship and find stability in their nation. Indonesia is struggling to give birth to more democracy after outside rule by the Dutch and Japanese, and then dictator-like governments after independence in 1945.

In a nation torn by political, ethnic and economic conflict, Mennonites deal with the tensions in a variety of ways.

After riots in 1998, Paulus Hartono, a Mennonite pastor, founded the Interfaith Committee. It fosters interreligious and interracial dialogue and funds humanitarian projects.

Paulus, pastor of the Mennonite congregation in Solo, works alongside Dian Nafi, a regional leader of moderate Muslims. They joined forces after the riots, induced by the fall of President Suharto, who had ruled for 32 years, and by a crashing economy.

The leaders work at peacemaking and creating safe places for dialogue to help quell conflict. Because dividing points in the conflict fall along religious lines, the tensions get labeled as religious ones. But politics and economics fuel the conflicts as people struggle to balance power and wealth.

These conflicts and independence movements have sparked killing, fighting and church burnings on Java and other islands, such as the Malukus. Two churches burned were Mennonite—one on Sumatra and one on Java.

"Radical Muslims do not like the develop-

Being friends: Paul Gunawan (left), GKMI's director of publications and documentation, and Sjakur Ama, the Muslim village chief of Lamper Lor, a section of the city of Semarang, work on joint community projects.

ment of Christians in Indonesia, so open conflicts appear," Paulus says. "This dislike for Christians is also used for political interest.

"The conflicts develop into ethnic conflicts … especially in places like central Java, where it becomes a Javanese-Chinese conflict, since most of the Chinese are Christians. … The conflicts are getting worse, because of economic differences. The general image is that Chinese-Christians-Catholics are middle- to high-class."

Triple minority: Yesaya Abdi, senior pastor of the GKMI Anugerah congregation in Jakarta, represents a triple minority: Christian, Mennonite and Chinese. He and many of the 250-plus church members are of Chinese descent.

Yesaya remembers standing on the top floor of their new meetinghouse as it was being built during the 1998 riots, killings and rapings. He prayed the church would survive.

"From where I stood upstairs on the floor without walls, I saw fire from the north, south, east and west, and I was afraid," he says.

The Anugerah church did survive. And it now thrives—but only by the grace of God, who will also strengthen them if persecution should still come, Yesaya says.

"We are afraid," he says with tears in his eyes. "But I want my people to know that if anything should happen … I will not leave this building. I will stay with them to the end."

Tensions: Evangelism can inflame tensions, says Tanto Handoko, general secretary of JKI, a synod whose priorities are evangelism and church planting. "We love peace, but it's a vicious cycle here," Tanto says. "Our goal is to bring disciples to the Lord and to train them to build churches. So, even though we want peace, we disturb it."

Radical Muslims burned a JKI meetinghouse in east Java early in 2000, he says. Stoning injured three church members. "Even though [persecution] happens, we don't ultimately fear, because we see it as a privilege," he says. "That's the cost of following Jesus."

Economic hardships and political chaos have made Indonesians hungry for God, Tanto says. This causes the Christian church to grow, despite its perils.

"Since the crisis here, people are seeking the Lord for help, and [people] have come to Christ in great numbers," he says.

To serve growing numbers of believers, JKI has established a detailed system for planting churches, he says. The synod has 41 mother churches in Indonesia. They all have at least one satellite, or mission church.

GKMI also has planted many mission churches and launched community projects through PIPKA, its board of missions and charities. The synod also sponsors YPPS, which works with Mennonite Central Committee to create community-based cooperatives and develop other projects.

GKMI and PIPKA have established 40 mother churches and more than 100 daughter churches, or mission congregations, on Java and several other islands.

In church planting and evangelism, interfaith dialogue and community involvement, Indonesian Mennonites strive to love God and love their neighbors.

Joint community projects: Examples of this spirit abound, including the ministries of Paul Gunawan, GKMI's director of publications and documentation, and Budi Santoso, pastor of a GKMI congregation in Semarang. Paul works with Sjakur Ama, the Muslim village chief of Lamper Lor, a section in Semarang. They build trust through joint community projects—such as a free-lunch program, the sale of rice for greatly reduced prices and youth outreach. They even share religious holidays.

"When my church [GKMI Sola Gratias] has a Christmas event, we invite all the neighbors, and all the people come, even though they are Muslim or Buddhist," Paul says.

"We all celebrate together, and Sjakur gives a speech. We try to have a program that all people, not just Christians, can enjoy."

Doors open both ways, from mosques as well as churches, Budi says. "We have such a good relationship in my neighborhood that I was even asked to preach last year at the mosque during a Muslim celebration for their month of fasting," he says.

"We live in a close area here. Church members and Muslims get along well, and we join together in many activities. [Church members] don't treat other people differently if they're not Christian. … We are making an effort to get closer to the community and to bring peace to them, to be a friend to them."

We live in a close area here. Church members and Muslims get along well, and we join together in many activities.

—Budi Santoso

Laurie L. Oswald, assistant editor of Mennonite Weekly Review, *wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a Mennonite editors group.*

Sharing the love of Christ

Family serves poor in a former prostitution district.

by Laurie L. Oswald

Devy Mudeng left a home in the suburbs of Semarang, Indonesia, to live among the poor in a former prostitution district. A church worker with the Mennonite synod JKI (see sidebar, p. 4), Devy doesn't see it as self-sacrifice—giving up earthly goods for heavenly gain or losing one's life to save it.

It is simpler for Devy. He remembers what it felt like to be a poor boy who was abused by an angry stepfather. So he simply loves.

He gives the love he never received as a boy—but later received from a relationship with Christ—to the downtrodden and diseased in one of Semarang's poorest districts, Sri Kuncoro. He serves at the JKI branch church there in the building of JKI's medical clinic, Amal Asih.

The Lord has touched my heart and changed my life, and I want [my neighbors] to experience what I experienced in the past.—*Devy Mudeng*

"The Lord has touched my heart and changed my life, and I want [my neighbors] to experience what I experienced in the past," Devy says.

"I came from a poor family, and my mother remarried my stepfather, a real dictator, from whom I felt no love," he says. "I lived with an aunt in Jakarta, a believer in Christ Jesus who had several pastors living in her boarding home. They shared the love of God with me."

Devy accepted Christ, went to Bible school and joined JKI six years ago. He lives in the district with his wife, Dyah Arandiati, and 1-year-old daughter, Kezia Stephany. They bring God's hope to a desperate area, where women sit on the stoops of rundown houses, likely waiting for business to alleviate suffering caused by poverty.

Women who are starving in the countryside come to the city to look for work. They often find prostitution is the only thing people want to hire them for.

"The government made prostitution illegal two years ago, but we know it's still going on illegally," said Tanto Handoko, general secretary for JKI.

Prostitutes come to the JKI clinic with sexually transmitted and other diseases. The clinic provides health care for about half the cost of regular clinics or for free for those who can't pay.

The clinic, staffed by a doctor and two nurses each afternoon, also serves as an opening for other ministry, Tanto says. Proselytization is illegal in Indonesia, even for Muslims, who make up about 90 percent of the population.

Devy strives to bring a holistic gospel to the people by caring for all their needs. He and other church workers conduct church services, Bible studies and youth and discipleship programs.

They also distribute rice, sugar and noodles to the hungry, and disciple those who request it and give JKI scholarships to school children.

"I feel closer to the people by living here," Devy says. "If anyone in the congregation needs help, I can easily see that need and can directly help them."

Devy's deepest passions are to help prostitutes turn from their lifestyle and to free church members from poverty. "I want to see

Deepest passions: Devy Mudeng (left) with his wife, Dyah Arandiati, and their 1-year-old daughter, Kezia Stephany.

BALAI PENGOBATAN
Amal Asih
JAM PRAKTEK:
HARI : SENIN - JUM'AT
WIB
HARI SABTU
MINGGU & HARI BESAR
TUTUP

the members of our church overcome their poverty," he says. "And yet, I still don't know the real key for helping them raise their economic level."

Many neighbors eke out a living. That includes selling foods such as "bakso"—sausages made out of chicken, beef or fish parts—from pushcarts; setting up small shops in their homes or hawking cigarettes and newspapers in rush-hour traffic. Children often sing and play beat-up ukuleles for coins at car windows or near tourist shops.

Devy and others meet some economic needs by distributing food about every three months. The official poverty line in Indonesia is about $1 a day, and the minimum wage is about that amount. Almost one out of four Indonesians makes less than that.

Receiving food for their bodies also draws neighbors to seek food for their souls, Devy says. "Distributing these goods makes questions arise in their hearts, such as, 'Why are you so kind to us?'" he says. "We tell them, 'It's because Jesus has changed our hearts, and we love you.'"

One way to bring prostitutes to Jesus, the great physician, is through clinic doctors. "Through the doctors, [the prostitutes] aren't hearing preaching, but they're establishing a good relationship with someone who cares," he says.

Devy and others—including former prostitutes who have accepted Christ—tell them Jesus cares about banishing their outer and inner poverty. "As we share the love of Jesus with them, they will sometimes open up and share their [inner] needs," Devy says.

One church member is a former pimp—someone who sets up clients for prostitutes. "She has opened up a little shop to sell food, and when prostitutes come in to share their problems, she shares Jesus," Devy says.

Now, instead of bringing clients to prostitutes, she brings prostitutes into God's kingdom.

"Through her, some other former prostitutes have become church members," Devy says.

Laurie L. Oswald, assistant editor of Mennonite Weekly Review, *wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a Mennonite editors group.*

Father and daughter benefited from MCC exchange

Tulham Prabu, a Mennonite pastor, and his daughter, Debora, grew up differently—he as a Muslim, she as a Mennonite. Yet as dissimilar as their childhoods, as young adult Christians they each participated in the International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP).

In the on-the-job training program sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee for 19- to 30-year-olds, the Indonesians spent a year in the United States and Canada, he in 1972-73, she in 1999-2000. Like all IVEP participants, they lived with Mennonite families and trained in assignments related to their skills and interests.

But unlike some participants, who may return home hard-pressed to find someone to understand their cross-cultural experiences, Debora, 25, knew she would have a captive audience with her father. They could share memories of working in nursing homes with the elderly. Debora, a college graduate in vocal music, worked in the activities department in a Mennonite nursing home in Abbotsford, B.C. Her father had worked as an orderly in nursing homes in Archbold, Ohio, and in Winnipeg.

Tulham Prabu

"[The elderly] would invite me to come their rooms, and I'd sing for them," Debora says. "Many of them were German people. And so our conversations were kind of funny, with them not being able to hear, and my Indonesian accent. But I learned a little bit of German, like 'guten morgen' [good morning] or 'danke schön' [thank you]. And they'd ask me to sing to them in Indonesian. I'd try to sing songs that were familiar to them, that they knew in German or English, and they'd sing along."

Tulham, a pastor at the Mennonite congregation in the village of Welahan, where about 90 percent of the people are Muslim, says his work with the elderly prompted him to encourage Debora to do the same. "I told her that if she really wanted to go into IVEP, she should try and that she could help older people and get a good feeling from working with them," Tulham says.

Tulham grew up Muslim and accepted Christ in high school. He took a huge leap in converting from Islam to Christianity and another in leaving the East for the West for a year. "I think it was a bridge-building time in North America, to be a part of the international brotherhood," he says.

His past work with the elderly has sparked a recent vision to build a nursing home on the church property, adjacent to a Muslim mosque only yards away. His congregation is discussing the possibility.

Crossing the global church bridge her father helped build has also inspired Debora's ministry. Upon her return in late summer, she joined the staff of the GKMI Anugerah church, a large Mennonite congregation in Jakarta, to work in music ministry.

Debora teaches voice lessons to adults and began a children's choir last October. In the choir she hopes to use what she learned in North American churches about encouraging children to express their gifts.

Debora Prabu

"The way children are raised here and in Canada is quite different," she says. "In Canada, they're encouraged to be brave, to sing out, to express themselves. But here they are not expected to be creative but to be quiet, to be polite, to do as they're told."

To start the choir, she faced some resistance from parents. They said they had tried a choir before, but it had failed. But she persisted, and 26 children rehearsed once a week for a Christmas program.

MCC strongly encourages IVEP participants to work in their home communities for a year after the program, because they come to North America through a trainee visa. In 2000-01, 64 people from 27 countries are IVEP trainees.—*Laurie L. Oswald*

Californian nominated moderator-elect

Current Executive Board secretary is integration veteran

NEWTON, Kan.—D. Duane Oswald of Fresno, Calif., who helped usher in one of the first integrated area conferences in the United States, has been nominated as moderator-elect for Mennonite Church USA.

His name will be submitted to delegates for approval at Nashville 2001, the joint General Conference Mennonite Church (GC)-Mennonite Church (MC) assembly to be held July 2-7. Current moderator Lee Snyder, Bluffton, Ohio, will complete her term at Nashville, and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, Harrisonburg, Va., will become moderator.

Oswald has filled a number of church leadership positions, including serving as the last moderator of the GC Pacific District Conference, 1992-94, and the first moderator of Pacific Southwest Conference, 1994-2000. Pacific Southwest was formed in 1994 by the merger of the southern Pacific District and the MC Southwest Conference. At the same time, the northern Pacific District and the MC Pacific Coast Conference created Pacific Northwest.

Oswald has also served on the MC General Board and is currently secretary of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

"We were looking for a person … who could bring experienced leadership and continuity to the [denominational transformation] process," says Mark Weidner of Elkhart, Ind., chair of the Leadership Discernment Committee, the new denomination's nominating committee. "Duane's experience with both MC and GC structures, two years on the new Executive Board and strong affirmation from his colleagues led to a unanimous decision by the committee to invite him to consider this nomination."

Oswald and his wife, Kathi, have three sons, Jeremy, Joshua and Jonathan, and are members of Mennonite Community Church in Fresno. He is president of Avante Health of Fresno, a medical consulting firm, and has a bachelor's degree in economics from Goshen (Ind.) College and a master's degree in healthcare administration from George Washington University in Washington.

"I have a passion for the Mennonite Church and its mission and want to use my administrative abilities to serve the church," Oswald says. "I have strong faith in both God and the people of the church that we can come together as a powerful witness in carrying out God's mission here on earth.

"I hope that in the transformed Mennonite Church we can celebrate our cultural diversity as we celebrate our oneness in Jesus Christ. My dream is for the Mennonite Church to focus on mission and bringing people to unity in Christ rather than on creating boundaries or obstacles."

Oswald was born in Meadville, Pa., and grew up in Oil City, Pa., where he was a member of Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Conneaut Lake, Pa. He was a member of Beaver Run Mennonite Church in Watsontown, Pa., from 1981 to 1986 while he served as chief executive officer of a hospital in Muncy, Pa. He and his family moved to Fresno in 1986.

"Duane will bring focused leadership to Mennonite Church USA, growing from his experiences of leadership in an already-joined conference," says Jim Schrag, executive director-designate for Mennonite Church USA. "His organizational, business and administrative background will help him ask the right questions of a new church at its beginning stages."

I have strong faith in both God and the people of the church that we can come together as a powerful witness in carrying out God's mission here on earth.

—Duane Oswald

MCC photo by Jack Leonard

Set in concrete

Warsha (center) and Anand Stephen (right), Mennonite Central Committee workers from India serving in Cambodia, visit with Pau Chun, who runs a small concrete business with her husband in Mesang, Cambodia. MCC recently hired the Chuns to make 40 sections of culverts to repair a road that runs through the village.

MCC sends couple to Africa to help determine agency's response to continent's HIV disaster

AKRON, Pa.—In 2000, the HIV virus infected 11 people each minute worldwide, according to the United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS. And sub-Saharan Africa bears the brunt of these infections. At least 12 million Africans have already died of AIDS-related conditions.

To respond to this pandemic, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has asked Delores and J. Stanley Friesen of Fresno, Calif., to travel to Africa to assist in developing a long-term strategy. The Friesens left Feb. 19.

Stan and Delores Friesen

"MCC and the constituency have responded to many disasters: earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, armed conflicts," says Edgar Metzler, director of MCC's international programs. "The scope of this disaster demands more."

The Friesens, who work in counseling, education and mission consulting, will visit eight African countries over three months: Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Ethiopia. The Friesens will make recommendations to MCC.

MCC workers in some African countries are already involved in HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment and in care for orphans who have lost parents to the disease.

Many factors complicate discussions and responses to HIV/AIDS. Disaster response tends to evince "prejudices, issues of control and the way relationships are formed," says Stan Friesen.

Adds Delores, "And the magnitude of this situation makes it difficult to partner North American values of effectiveness and efficiency with mutuality and affection."

Stan says politics and economics contribute to the problem. "The disease [has] spread more rapidly by circumstances created by apartheid and colonialism, for example by migratory labor patterns, where families are broken up and men are forced to find work in mining camps far from their homes," he says. The men may spend eight or more months in group camps where prostitution is prevalent. On brief trips home, they carry the virus back to their families.

The Friesens hope to find ways for people from North America to appropriately respond to the AIDS crisis. The key to a Christian, and specifically Anabaptist, response may lie in approaching it as a peace and justice issue, they say.

"Our peace belief speaks to the fact that violence destroys communities," Stan says. "AIDS is destroying the fabric of families and communities."—*Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

Second conference held Down Under

The Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand held its second conference Jan. 25-28 in Melbourne, Australia. AAANZ emerged in the mid-1990s and was incorporated as an Australian religious organization in 1998.

The conference featured a daily central presentation, numerous workshops, a Saturday evening public event, free time to explore the city and three suggested Sunday worship services in local congregations featuring speakers from AAANZ.

The conference also welcomed mission workers Mark and Mary Hurst, who will be pastoral workers with AAANZ. The Hursts are serving with Eastern Mennonite Missions, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. The Hursts had served in Australia in the early 1990s but had spent the past five years in the United States.

"It was good to see old friends and to meet new folks interested in Anabaptism," Mark Hurst says. *—MBM News Service*

Speaker: Thank God for 81 percent

AKRON, Pa.—With at least 19 percent of its population with HIV, Botswana has the highest infection rate in the world. But HIV/AIDS has been present in the country for 20 years, so Edward Baralemwa thanks God that 81 percent are not infected.

Baralemwa, a former clergyman in the Anglican Church, is director of the Botswana Christian AIDS Intervention Program. He spoke Feb. 14 to staff at Mennonite Central Committee headquarters in Akron.

Baralemwa first learned about HIV from a minister in his home country, Uganda, in 1983. The minister told congregations of God's new medicine for fornicators, a disease called AIDS afflicting sinners in California. HIV had already spread to Uganda, unknown to the minister and the congregations.

Though never presented as an official church position, Baralemwa believes residue from such messages still contributes to people's feelings of bitterness and shame toward God and Christian organizations, now that HIV is so prevalent.

Baralemwa

Denominations hold varying positions on what should be done to prevent the disease. "We could debate or write books on our differences," Baralemwa said, "but we've decided to do something instead and discuss them along the way."—*Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

Return to Anabaptist roots for church planting, speaker tells evangelism council participants

Stuart Murray (right) discusses church planting with Cal Kaufman, interim pastor of Sunnyslope Mennonite Church, Phoenix, during the Anabaptist Evangelism Council, held Feb. 17-19. Murray, a British church planter and seminary professor and chair of the United Kingdom Anabaptist Network, was the council's featured presenter.

GCMC photo by Dick Benner

ELGIN, Ill.—Mennonite and Brethren church planters need to draw more explicitly on their own roots in order to establish churches that are as radical in contemporary society as 16th-century Anabaptist churches were in theirs, says British church planter Stuart Murray.

"I don't care if you plant 10 churches or 50 churches over the next decade," Murray told 61 pastors, denominational leaders, seminary representatives and mission executives gathered for the fourth annual Anabaptist Evangelism Council Feb. 17-19 in Elgin. "The goal is not to plant more churches but better ones—churches more concerned with values than with techniques, churches that are healthier, more sustainable."

The conference was sponsored by New Life Ministries, an inter-Anabaptist organization of five North American denominations: General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church Canada, Brethren Church and Church of the Brethren, plus two parachurch organizations.

Murray introduced himself as "a sort of disembodied Mennonite." He grew up in a Plymouth Brethren home, attended an Anglican school and came to faith in a Methodist church. A church planter over the past 20 years, he is now teaching church planting and evangelism at Spurgeon's College, a Baptist seminary in London, and is chair of the United Kingdom Anabaptist Network. The network sponsors study groups and conferences.

Claiming that current church planting is being done in a cultural time warp of post-Christendom "saturation planting," Murray appealed to the group to study their own heritage. He said the Anabaptist reformers planted believers, rather than territorial churches, who were committed to mission. They were multivoiced in worship, had a church discipline and engaged in truth-telling and mutual aid.

"We are living in a postmodern culture where most persons under age 35 don't even know the biblical story, are deeply spiritual but not too religious, are alienated and wanting connections but are really not committed to anything, especially the established institutions of society, including the church," Murray said.

He listed four features important for a new church plant: a community of faith that allows for doubt and dialogue; one that embraces spirituality; one that works with new believers in a narrative rather than a doctrinal mode; and one that builds a community focused on friendships, not more meetings.

Among the "10 most valuable lessons" he learned in church planting, Murray said, were the choice of the right leadership, prepare the planting church, research the target community, identify core values before setting flexible structures, and consider "network churches" as well as neighborhood churches.

While disagreeing with some of Murray's presuppositions regarding Anabaptism, Walter Sawatsky, a professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., also decried in his listening report that there was "very little explicit reference to the histories of evangelism of the churches participating here."

"Is there a history of what you have done?" Sawatsky asked. "Do you know it in general terms and in critical terms? Why is it that I do not naturally know that story?"

He said he was struck by Murray's call for a more relaxed approach to membership rules, to move from being "bounded churches" to "centered churches" at a time when the "stronger and more persistent voices" in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church are calling for stronger boundaries and litmus tests as they merge to create Mennonite Church USA.

"Stuart's framing of things forces us to see [stronger boundaries] as a fearful response, how it tends to hinder church planting of the kinds of churches we seek in the emerging North American culture," Sawatsky said.—*Dick Benner for GCMC News Service*

Language doesn't spell trouble for MK

Language is often a barrier for mission workers from the United States going overseas. But it can also be problematic for missionary kids, or MKs, when they return to the United States.

Just ask Mimi Hollinger-Janzen, an eighth grader at Bethany Christian Middle School in Goshen, Ind., and winner of the Elkhart County Spelling Bee last month. While her parents, Rod and Lynda, were serving in West Africa with Mennonite Board of Missions, Mimi went to a British international school in Benin.

Said Mimi, "I just hoped that they wouldn't give me a word like 'color' "—or "colour," according to the British.

She wasn't given that word in the bee, but Mimi did correctly spell "greave" (armor on the legs below the knees) and "latchet" (a leather strap holding a shoe to the foot) en route to qualifying for the Indiana State Spelling Bee later this month.

Among Mimi's fellow spellers was Ana Yoder, a sixth grader at Jimtown (Ind.) Middle School, who was born in Nairobi, Kenya, when her parents, Kevin and Sharon, were serving with Eastern Mennonite Missions. —*Steve Plenert*

New leaders named for anti-racism work

AKRON, Pa—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. has named Brenda Zook Friesen of Baltimore and Conrad Moore of Lancaster, Pa., as co-coordinators of its Damascus Road anti-racism program.

For more than five years, MCC U.S. has offered Damascus Road training to churches and organizations interested in how racism affects their institutions. Until recently the program was headed by Tobin Miller Shearer and Regina Shands Stoltzfus (see Feb. 27 issue).

Friesen

Moore

"Tobin and Regina laid a solid groundwork within the churches," says Moore, who has worked for two years as Damascus Road team organizer and MCC East Coast peace educator. "The program helps people work at systemic levels of racism, not only at individual levels."

Moore joined the Mennonite Church several years ago through his work at Liberty Ministries, a program for ex-offenders in Schwenksville, Pa., largely supported by Mennonite congregations, conferences and businesses. He and his wife, Theresa, visited Mennonite congregations in the Schwenksville area and said they were drawn by the way church members "smiled with their eyes."

Friesen spent two years with MCC in New Orleans doing anti-racism work with secular organizations. She participated in the first Damascus Road training program in Chicago in 1996.

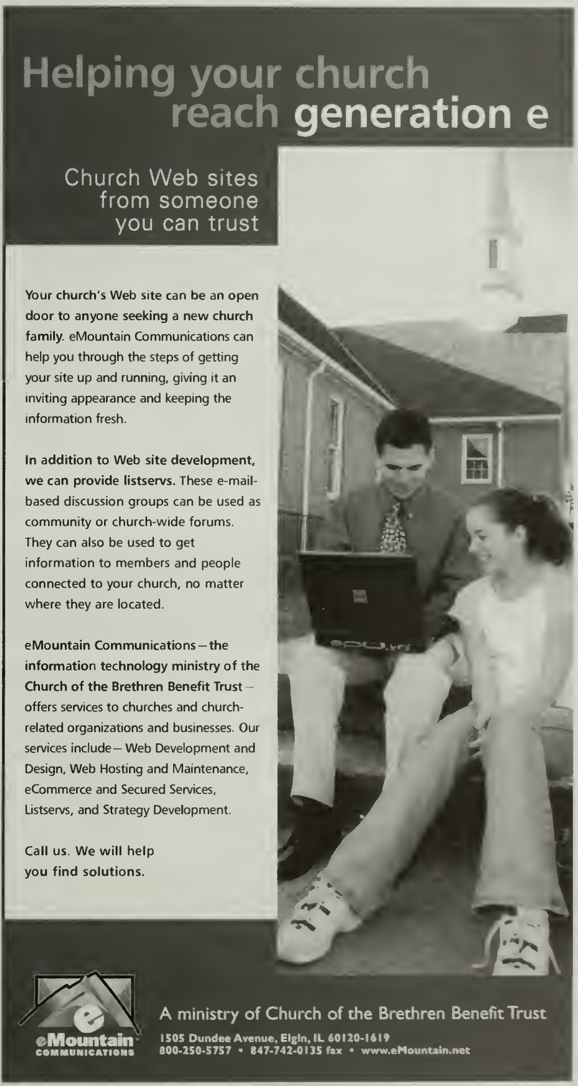
"Ever since I began in New Orleans, I knew this was going to be lifework," Friesen says. "I'm looking forward to giving it all my energy."

Moore and Friesen hope to increase the number of Damascus Road core trainers and to develop materials on internalized racist oppression, a term used for racism's affects on people of color.—*MCC News Service*

CPT sending second delegation to Vieques

CHICAGO—On the heels of its largest delegation ever, Christian Peacemaker Teams is planning to send 12 people to the Puerto Rican island of Vieques to protest the U.S. Navy's use of the island as a practice bombing site. The group will go when bombing resumes in early March.

Twenty-seven people went to Vieques in January to work with peace advocates opposing the bombing. That visit led to the invitation for the latest delegation.—*CPT News Service*



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MDS to establish office in Winnipeg

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Disaster Service, a binational organization with headquarters in Akron, will open an extension office in Winnipeg this spring in order to better serve the Canadian volunteers, the MDS board decided at a Feb. 8 meeting.

Forty-seven percent of MDS long-term volunteers come from Canada. The new office will assist volunteers with paperwork related to transportation, border crossings and applications to MDS programs. The Winnipeg office will also be able to spend funds generated in Canada, thereby averting the devaluation that occurs when donated Canadian dollars are turned into U.S. dollars.

"This is by no means the beginning of two MDS organizations," said Canadian region director Abe Ens. "The minute it begins to look like that, we will drop it like a hot potato." —*MDS News Service*

CPT enjoying increase in contributions, workers

WINNIPEG—With contributions, personnel and opportunities to serve all increasing, Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) is hoping to expand its work in areas of conflict around the globe.

Giving to CPT last year was up 20 percent, including a 64 percent increase from Canadian supporters. Meanwhile, the number of CPT full-time workers increased from 12 to 18 and membership in the reserve corps jumped from 74 to 109. This growth has allowed CPT to begin a new project in Colombia.

"In five years, we expect that we will have up to 10 projects in the field staffed by 50 full-timers and 250 reservists," says CPT Canada director Doug Pritchard. "If this growth continues, we're going to be a much larger organization."—*Canadian Mennonite*

Bethel reports gains in spring enrollment

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Spring enrollment at Bethel College is up, thanks to 29 new students at mid-year and a 93.1 percent retention rate from the fall semester. Spring semester head count is 520. Fall enrollment was 506, and spring 2000 enrollment was 484.

Of the 29 new students, 16 enrolled for the first time at Bethel. The new students come from Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, Texas and Utah and the countries of Albania, Kenya and Uganda. All figures are based on enrollment after the 20th day of classes, which was Feb. 26.

"These numbers are very encouraging," says Bethel president Douglas Penner. "We are convinced that Bethel College continues to draw students because of our emphasis on educating the whole person."

this date in Mennonite history

March 6, 1972—Anna Mankes-Zernike, the first woman to pastor a Mennonite congregation in the Netherlands, dies at age 84.

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- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel *(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

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Events

Mennonite Secondary Education Council choral festival, April 6-8, featuring 14 Mennonite secondary schools, at Rockway Mennonite Collegiate, Kitchener, Ont. For information, call 519-743-5209.

Births

Contreras, Carolina, Jan. 18, to Aracely and Jaime Contreras, Goshen, Ind.

Haman, Matthew Brooke, Feb. 7, to Amy (Halteman) and Eric Haman, Harleysville, Pa.

Headings, Cameron Creigh, Dec. 26, 2000, to Becky (Gingerich) and Ron Headings, Plain City, Ohio.

Janzen, Micah Mateo, Jan. 17, to Henry and Lara Janzen, Clackamas, Ore.

Kennel, Alexa Kathryn, Feb. 10, to Kathryn (Hagel) and Timothy Kennel, Souderton, Pa.

Mann, Esther Marie, Feb. 2, to Mike and Taunia Mann, Portland, Ore.

Miller, Nicole Lynn, Jan. 27, to Glen and Irma (Diener) Miller, Ligonier, Ind.

Nester-Detweiler, Holli Ann, Dec. 25, 2000, to Cheryl (Detweiler) and Dan Nester-Detweiler, Princeton, N.J.

Ruby, Isaiah Daniel, Feb. 7, to Mary Ann (Schumm) and Myron Ruby, Tavistock, Ont.

Sunderland, Rachel Joy, Feb. 2, to Juli (Yoder) and Randy Sunderland, Huntingdon, Pa.

Swartley, Megan Elizabeth, Jan. 29, to Christian and Leah (Buxman) Swartley, Altadena, Calif.

Thieszen, Colin Roy, Feb. 13, to David and Shelby (Muth) Thieszen, Aurora, Neb.

Umble, Melissa Kate, Feb. 16, to Doug and Karen (Kramer) Umble, Lancaster, Pa.

Marriages

Melhem/Musselman: Gregory Melhem, Easton, Pa., and Amanda Musselman, Harleysville, Pa., Feb. 17 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Deaths

Harder, Sarah Baerg, 89, Mountain Lake, Minn., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Peter Harder (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Anna Penner Baerg (deceased). Survivors: children Ma Jean Heide, Delano; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 3 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.

Histand, Gertrude, 65, Trevose, Pa., died Jan. 17. Parents: Harvey and Martha Hendricks Histand (deceased). Memorial service: Jan. 24 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Kaufman, Clifford, 90, Kingman, Kan., died Jan. 25. Spouse: Frieda Graber Kaufman. Parents: Rudolph and Caroline Kaufman Kaufman (deceased). Other survivors: children Clemon, Connie Gehring, Carol Voran; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 29 at Kingman.

Litwiller, Lloyd, 72, Delavan, Ill., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Sara Mast Litwiller. Parents: Joe and Alma Good Litwiller (deceased). Other survivors: children Russell, David, Philip, Clifford, Mary Holsopple, Dan, Roger; 24 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 14 at Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, William, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Lydia Troyer (deceased). Parents: Joe and Lydia Troyer Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Mary, Myrna, DeVon, Ronald, Pam; 13 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Goshen.

Reimer, Dora Evelyn, 85, Arvada, Colo., died Jan. 24 of a stroke. Parents: Gerhard and Eva Reimer (deceased). Memorial service: Feb. 7 at Arvada Mennonite Church.

Schrag, Elmer, 90, Freeman, S.D., died Jan. 15. Spouse: Clarice Waltner Schrag. Parents: John and Frances Gering Schrag (deceased). Other survivors: children Phyllis Bovill, Renee Hartman, Ken, Rita Hicks; 14 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 19 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Swartley, Katie Violet Nyce, 93, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 1. Spouse: Raymond Swartley (deceased). Parents: Wilson and Ellen Swartley Nyce (deceased). Survivors: children Lester, Robert, Raymond, Wilson; 23 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Souderton Mennonite Home.

Waltner, Arthur, 93, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 22. Spouse: Edna Graber Waltner (deceased). Parents: Joe and Caroline Graber Waltner (deceased). Survivors: daughter Marjorie Schrag; three grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 26 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Wedel, Sherrill Lee, 49, Corona del Mar, Calif., died Feb. 2 of cancer. Spouse: Victor Wedel. Parents: Ray Lee (deceased) and Meredith Ferdig. Other survivors: children Kim Bullock, Victor Wedel II, Melissa. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Corona del Mar.

Wenger, Marian Eby, 85, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 2. Spouse: John Wenger (deceased). Parents: Ira and Ella Book Eby (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Lois Handrich, Janet Marshman, Ruth; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 5 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Yeackley, Ray, 81, Colorado Springs, Colo., died Feb. 4 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Evelyn Miller Yeackley. Parents: Fred and Lydia Saltzman Yeakley (deceased). Other survivors: children Ray, Roger, Verla Hartzler, Loree King; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Colorado Springs.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

Judy Wening-Horswell ©1978

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- **Crooked Creek Christian Camp**, a rapidly growing Mennonite camp located in southeastern Iowa, seeks an ***administrator***, starting Aug. 1, 2001.

  Send resume and inquiries to Edwin D. Miller, 837 3rd Pl., Kalona, IA 52247; email <edmmjm@kctc.net>.

- **House of His Creation** seeks ***executive director***. Christian residential program for pregnant/parenting teens in S.E. Pa. Master's and two years exp. or bachelor's and four years exp. in administration or human services.

  Send resume to HOHC, 91 Newport Pike, Suite 203, Gap, PA 17527; 717-442-4890; email <housecreation@aol.com>.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** has two full-time positions available for mission-minded people at dynamic, multifaceted camp ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church:

  Youth camp kitchen manager: Responsible for oversight and food preparation for our youth camp serving approx. 30,000 meals in the summer. For remainder of year, will serve as cook within the retreat center food service. Experience in group food service and management needed.

  Executive assistant: Serves as primary support person for the executive director and director of development, performing clerical, organizational and personnel tasks. Strong organizational and people skills preferred.

  Salary and liberal benefits package for both positions. On-site housing available. Both start immediately. Send resume to Executive Director, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>.

- **Rural Idaho community health center** needs ***family practitioners*** with OB to serve uninsured. Three Mennonite doctors on staff of six. Spanish helps.

  Call Mark Mering, M.D., 208-342-2405, or email <mmering@trhs.org>.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 urban school, seeks ***assistant principal***. Counseling experience or training in counseling is preferred. Contract begins Aug. 1, 2001.

  For more information, contact Ib Thomsen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Freeman, S.D., is seeking an ***associate pastor*** to fill a half-time position with an emphasis on family life and youth ministry. Collegiate or seminary pastoral training is preferred but not required.

  Direct inquiries and resumes to Rudy Brockmueller, 28458 - 442nd Ave., Freeman, SD 57029; 605-925-4542; email <brock@gwtc.net>.

- **House of His Creation** seeks ***houseparents***: Christian home for pregnant/parenting teens in S.E. Pa. Live-in position for a married couple with strong desire for discipleship. R&B, salary, health benefits.

  Send resume to HOHC, 91 Newport Pike, Suite 203, Gap, PA 17527; 717-442-4890; email <housecreation@aol.com>.

- **Tel Hai Retirement Community**, Honey Brook, Pa., seeks a ***CEO***. Requirements include Christian commitment, endorsement of Mennonite values, 5 years senior leadership experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <info@mhsonline.org>.

- **Connecting Families Weekend *April 20-22, 2001***, at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pa. Theme: "Drawing Strength for the Journey." Nancy Bieber, psychotherapist and spiritual director, weekend leader. Welcome to families, friends and supporters of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. This is intended to be a safe, relaxing weekend to share common concerns regarding homosexuality as it affects our families, friends, churches and ourselves. Contact 937-676-3221 or <lshorts13@earthlink.net>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***elementary 4th-grade teacher, middle school science/math, middle school Bible/social studies***. Bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Bluffton College** seeks a full-time ***director of libraries*** beginning Aug. 1, 2001. Responsibilities include leadership and coordination of planning, budgeting, managing the collections and staffing of Musselman Library, including the Mennonite Historical Library, the Bluffton College Archives and other collections on campus; direct the library's integration of technology through its participation in the OPAL and Ohiolink consortia; represent library matters to administration, serve as liaison with library publics, and interact effectively with faculty and others in promoting the mission of the library. Graduate degree from the ALA-accredited program required; Ph.D. preferred; administrative and supervisory experience in an academic setting expected. Bluffton College is a growing, Mennonite-related college committed to and shaped by the historic peace church traditions. See <www.bluffton.edu/about/employment/index.html>.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference submitted directly from the referee and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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Moving forward using the skills of all members

by Zenebe Abebe

If we want to be a global church, then tapping the skills of all members—regardless of their background or ethnic makeup—becomes critical to the success of the new denomination. The identity of the new, integrated denomination as a community of faith, and the Anabaptist theology it values, can only be strengthened with the power of our unity and from the wealth of our diversity.

We are one body with many members (1 Corinthians 12:14). Uniting as a church family is only possible if our emphasis is on wholeness and interconnectedness, as Christ meant it to be. However, the possibility of our oneness may be in question when the lack of affirmation for one another persists because of differences—especially if one group dominates another.

Community building for the new church is critical. The face of the church is changing and will continue to do so in the coming century. Besides the varieties of both color and ethnic background throughout the church are the endless and fascinating cultures, languages, worship styles and attitudes that will eventually make up the great Mennonite Church pool.

These differences can become our strengths. These are gifts, insights for understanding the larger world.

Our inability to be inclusive does not come from our knowledge of each other but from a lack of it. At a time when increasing diversity issues are in the center of the nation's debate, the church is still defining diversity and what it means to be inclusive.

Privileged culture: The church can't become global and can't integrate fully and completely until it embraces all believers. This also means looking into the structure of the church and acknowledging that the makeup of the leadership of the church must reflect its members. Those who have been systematically kept out of top positions in church institutions are no less able to carry out a task than those of a privileged culture. We must see integration as placing the church in a better position to serve all its members by utilizing all its human resources.

In order to come together, the members of the church family must not merely tolerate one another. To genuinely worship and serve, we must accept one another as members of God's family unconditionally. If we keep Jesus as the center of our mission, it will not be difficult to act as servants of one another (Matthew 23:11). We must not let oppression or traditional thinking impede the development of every member of the new Mennonite Church as potential leader, responsible community member and peacemaker.

What can be done?

1. Recognize the systemic problem of institutional racism. A challenge will be to break the wall of racism that separates church members from each other.

2. Look into the church's system of personnel, policy and practices about the misuse of power. Power has been used to control the powerless and protect privileges available to some members but not others.

3. Move away from categorizing people. God created all of us in his image, but we invented race to divide us.

4. Take the risk in unpopular issues such as anti-racism, equality and ethnic-based leadership in church institutions.

5. Have a well-developed long-term plan to change the church's day-to-day operating structure so that opportunity for church leadership is open to all members, regardless of their ethnic makeup.

6. Eliminate unnecessary categories such as women, African-American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American. These groups must be appropriately represented in the new denominational structure. Associate membership as it stands now becomes unnecessary if every group membership is recognized and represented.

7. Make special efforts to acknowledge the presence and contribution of the church's ethnic members by including them in church publications and Sunday school materials, featuring multiethnic pictures, stories and traditions.

As we move forward with transformation, the real evidence of change will not only be symbolic but actual changes of hearts and minds rooted in the spirit of oneness.

The possibility of our oneness may be in question when the lack of affirmation for one another persists because of differences—especially if one group dominates another.

Zenebe Abebe is vice president of multicultural education at Goshen (Ind.) College.

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Everett J. Thomas

The wisdom of our elders

After they finished speaking, James replied, "My brothers, listen to me ... I have reached the decision ..."—Acts 15:13,19a

James' simple statement reveals a world far different from ours. Several years after Jesus' death, this disciple listened to a long debate about whether Gentiles coming into the new Christian church needed to be circumcized and follow other Jewish laws. The debate was at the center of the famous Jerusalem Council described at length in Acts 15. This gathering was also a turning point in a process which would enable the early church to become more than a Jewish cult. The issues debated that day were as monumental for those leaders as any would be for us in the church today.

But the decision-making process was far different. One wise and elderly person was acknowledged as the arbiter of the issue. After listening to the debate, James simply announced his decision. No vote. No recounts. We know from other Scriptures that dissidents resisted the direction James set for the new church. But his wisdom prevailed.

The tradition of an elderly person being entrusted with the well-being of the community is one which continues in many parts of the world today. A recently returned missionary described an identical process in West African villages. Everyone has their say and makes their case before the assembled community, he said. Finally, at the appropriate moment, a wise and experienced leader announces what the group will do.

While it would be impossible and probably inappropriate to have such a decision-making process in our culture today, it would be appropriate to find our own ways to utilize the wisdom and experience of the elders in our midst. How can our church be good stewards of that wisdom? Might we spend less energy posturing and prognosticating if we knew there were wise and gentle leaders listening intently and who then would announce their decision? After all, this is the traditional role of the "elder."

One place to find such wisdom is in a newsletter published by the Mennonite Association of Retired Persons. It is called *pages* and is edited by Helen L. Lapp. I was struck by a column in the Winter 2001 issue called "Gone Home in 2000." It is a list of people to whom the editor gave tribute. One of those was Jacob Gotwals, a member of Plains Mennonite Church in Hatfield, Pa.

"Jake was a model of how to swim against the current joyfully," writes Lapp. "I recall Jake resisting the age-specific class groupings at Plains, arguing gently for shared experiences and wisdoms from old to young as well as the stimulus he felt coming from the young to old."

The wisdom latent in our older generations is especially valuable for our church today. These sisters and brothers navigated seismic changes during their lifetimes. Few impose their opinions on others any more, but quietly wait for an opportunity to offer a word that will make the church stronger.

Many in these generations expressed their nonresistant faith in the 1940s and 1950s by bringing integrity and respect to the words "civilian public service" or by serving faithfully in 1-W or PAX or Voluntary Service. These are the generations that created or strengthened many of the church institutions we have today. These elder sisters and brothers gave sacrificially to mission progams and helped create a Mennonite and Anabaptist world family which now numbers nearly a million members.

How can the church be a good steward of their wisdom and experience, before both are gone?—*ejt*

Few impose their opinions on others any more, but wait quietly for an opportunity to offer a word that will make the church stronger.

Thankful for an editor emeritus

Those of us who work on this magazine are accountable to the Interim Periodical Board, which carries responsibility for *The Mennonite* on behalf of Mennonite Church USA. I am grateful that the IPB decided to create the position of editor emeritus and named J. Lorne Peachey to this position. Peachey started three church periodicals during his 30 years as an editor. He has been a constant help and coach to me over the past four months. Nearly every week I discover some new way he has made this transition easier. I hope that as we are good stewards of his wisdom and experience, this magazine will be strengthened.—*ejt*

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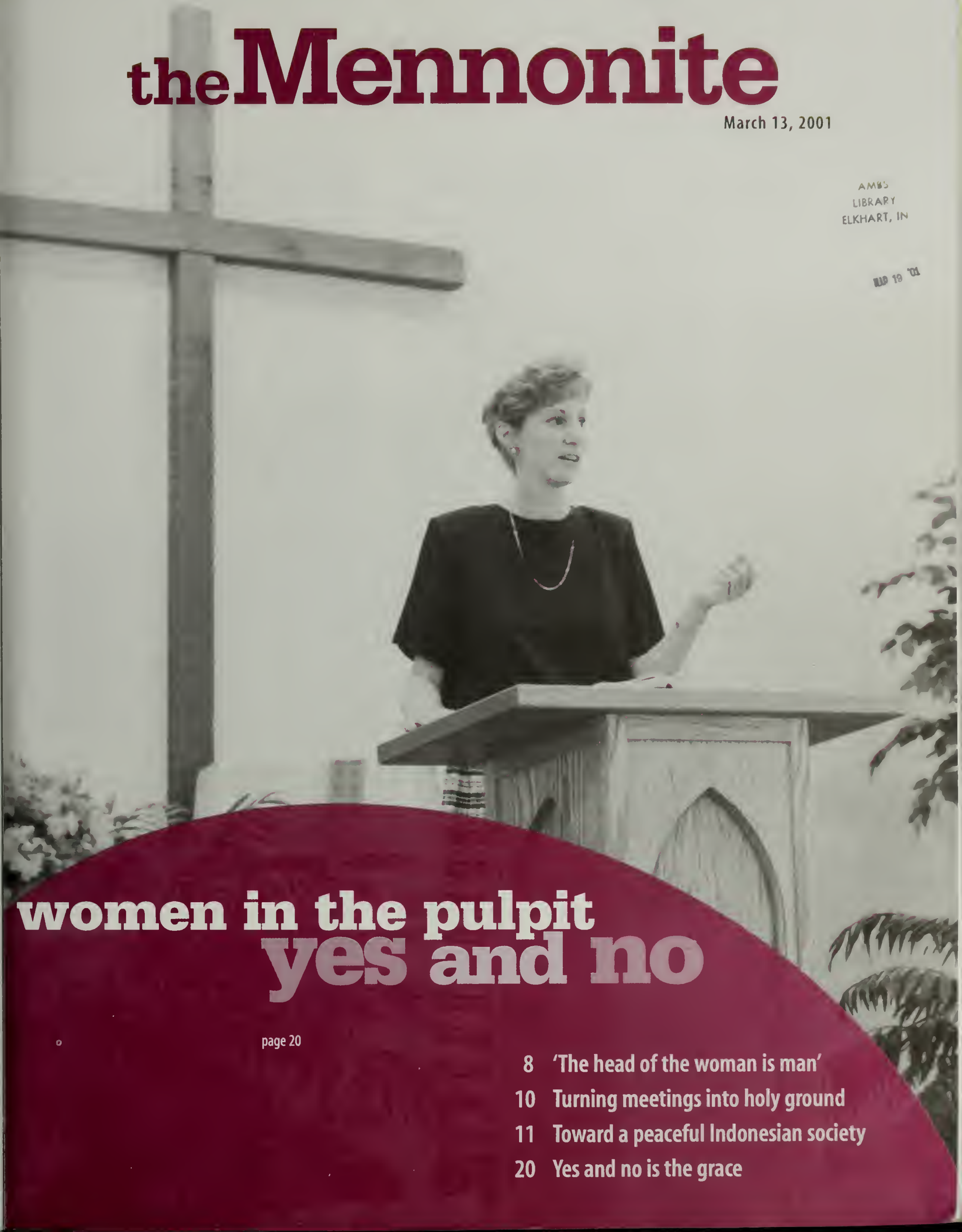

women in the pulpit yes and no

page 20

8 'The head of the woman is man'
10 Turning meetings into holy ground
11 Toward a peaceful Indonesian society
20 Yes and no is the grace

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

New wineskins, new church

The Feb. 20 editorial, "The New Wineskins Polity" was helpful. I might add that all of these "poli" words derive from "polis," which was the Greek word for the local community. Thus words such as policy, polity, politics and even police all deal with what it takes to live together. They may not imply perfect harmony, but they do imply what it takes to cooperate for common purposes and well-being. At the very least they should imply living together with civility. When applied to church, let us hope they imply more: the means to bond in Christian love.

We often give the "poli" words a negative tone. Some policies are indeed unjust; some politics are indeed sordid. Polity can be chaotic at one extreme, authoritarian at the other and in those cases oppressive. But no group can act together without some forms of policy, politics, polity and probably even (in some sense) police. These come inherently with living together, with the need to cooperate, with community. Let us be glad that, as Everett Thomas implied, we can carry on polity discussions calmly. If we want to be bonded together in Christian community, we need to do the same with all the "polis" words.—*Theron F Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

I was delighted by "The New Wineskins Polity" and Dennis Koehn's article, "New Wineskins." This is the kind of work that really helps the church grasp the significance of the transformation project. Thanks for your good work. —*Ervin R. Stutzman, Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Repentance responses

Re "Role of Repentance" (John Zimmerman, Readers Say, Feb. 20): I am concerned that one could promote such a position in light of what appears to be the very clear teaching on the role of repentance in Scripture. While the instances referenced in the letter may not explicitly state the existence of repentance on the part of the one forgiven, one can hardly make a case that repentance was not present, especially in the case of Luke 7:36-50. In the case of Mark 2:1-11 and John 7:53-8:11, we cannot know what was in the hearts of those forgiven. Certainly an oral declaration of one's repentance and a request for forgiveness is not a prerequisite for forgiveness to be given. What is required is an attitude of repentance in the heart. Only Christ could see that in the passages referenced.

Repentance (or some form of the word) appears 29 times in the Gospels. It appears 66 times in the New Testament. In many cases the demand for repentance is crystal clear. In Luke 5:31-32, Christ himself states that one of the reasons he came to this earth was "to call … sinners to repentance." Of course, the primary reason he came was to make it possible for a repentant heart to find forgiveness from a loving God. In Acts 17:30 we are told that God "commands all people everywhere to repent." While the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14 is directed at the nation of Israel, I believe that the whole of Scripture teaches us that repentance is what God desires, and God responds to those who sincerely repent. The psalmist declares, "[A] broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." What is needed today is a church (beginning with myself) that recognizes the need for repentance, not one that minimizes God's demand for it.

I fear that if we accept the position that God forgives all without regard for their repentance or request for forgiveness, we do violence to the clear teaching of Scripture. More importantly, we may do so to the peril of our eternal souls.—*Neal D. Clemens, Walnut Creek, Ohio*

Ah, a breath of fresh air wafting through the cracks of the Mennonite house. Way to go, John Zimmerman! Perhaps grace hasn't breathed its last in our house of "good" works. I wonder if transformation might live again other than as a label given to denominational structures.—*Gil Reed, Nappanee, Ind.*

Self-preservation problems

Re "Say No to Self-Preservation" by Jim S. Amstutz (Feb. 20): The reader is persuaded to refrain from any participation in warfare based on "our confession … that although we can no more save our ourselves from our enemies than we can save ourselves from our sins, God's amazing grace offers to save us from both." If we are not responsible for any action for self-preservation from our enemies, would the same argument not also apply to the use of the medical practice for our healing? Or since God promises to provide for our food, clothing and shelter, do we need to work? Would slavery have ended in America without someone taking action? Since God promises to help the orphan and the widow, why should I need to help?

I see Amstutz's reasoning as specious. On close examination, we recognize that we are

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theMennonite
Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

also involved in our salvation from our sins. We are to repent and be baptized, and if we do not forgive one another's sins, then neither will God forgive ours. Amstutz's simplistic world of noninvolvement is not our reality, and I thank God that our government allows Christians to choose not to participate in its bloodiest aspects. We must, however, be careful not to have a judgmental attitude of those who make a different choice.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

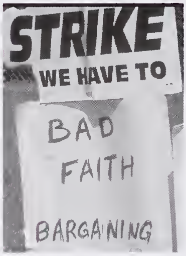
Regard for memories

I was appalled to read James M. Lapp's article "Waiting in the Wilderness" (Feb. 13). Frankly, the content of the article was well written and quite relevant for the integrated Mennonite Church. What was appalling to me was the memory of how quickly Franconia Conference expelled Germantown Mennonite Church over differences relating to church membership. Where was the focus on memories, balcony work, prayer discernment and relationship then? James Lapp and the Franconia Conference should remove the log from their own eyes before attempting to remove the splinter from mine. When I see articles printed that seem to have such little regard for memories of the recent past, I wonder how we will ever move into the future as an integrated church. —*Gary R. Barber, San Francisco*

Not going either

Thank you, Paul Isaak, for raising the issue of the high cost of the convention at Nashville (Readers Say, Feb. 20). Had I written the letter, I probably would have used more colorful adjectives perhaps not appropriate for a church magazine. I also question whether Nashville is the best setting for a Mennonite convention. At this point, I don't plan to go either.—*Alvin Schmidt, Walton, Kan.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt



Unions and conscience

In the articles on Mennonites and unions (Feb. 6), I could not find any reference to exemption from union membership on grounds of conscience. In my opinion, the failure to provide workers with an exemption from union membership on grounds of conscience and the failure to inform workers of such a provision is as much a violation of human rights as is the refusal to allow trade unions.

I find there are many who have never heard of such provisions and wish they had. Others, particularly in the human services sector, finding their consciences more and more compromised by unions that will not represent their concerns, are deeply concerned with their association with their union and with contributing dues to those unions. At the same time, many of these conscientious workers are afraid to speak for fear of reprisals.—*David Neufeld, Herschel, Sask.*

Schools and discipleship

"Memo to the Administration" (Jan. 30) paints a pretty grim picture of spirituality at the Mennonite schools and colleges. I'm sorry that the author (who does not attend a Mennonite college) takes this view. My own experience has been just the opposite. After graduating from a fundamentalist Christian school where students were force-fed a daily regimen of Bible verses, prayer and flag pledges, I made the cautious decision to attend a Mennonite college. I couldn't be more grateful for having made that decision. Sure, it felt a little disconcerting at first when many of the familiar daily rituals were no longer required, but over time I began to appreciate and then was challenged by the deep spirituality of both professors and administration. My profs wove issues of faith and spirituality into a curriculum that challenged the entire college community to discern together what it means to live out our faith and calling as Anabaptist Christians.

I recently had the privilege of visiting eight Mennonite colleges and universities in the United States and Canada and have become even more convinced of the vitality and depth of spirituality and Christian commitment on the Mennonite campuses. Some brief examples:

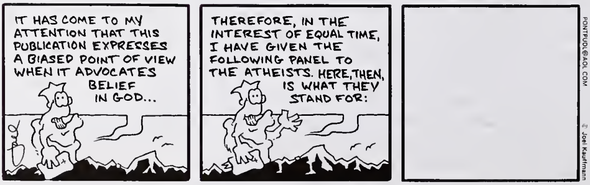
- At Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., I was deeply moved while participating in a Taizé service, including the reading of Scripture, quiet meditation and song, held on a Sunday evening and initiated, directed and attended by a mixture of students, faculty and members of the community.
- At Bluffton (Ohio) College, I spoke at a highly energetic, student-led chapel service in a large auditorium filled with students and faculty, none of whom was required to attend.
- At Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., I sat in on a packed-out peace and justice course where students struggled to understand their role as Christians in confronting the destructive powers of our society.

There continues to be room for improvement and a deepening of spirituality on our campuses, and the author does well in encouraging educational administrators and faculty to take this aspect of Mennonite education seriously. But my own experience (though I cannot speak for the high schools) is that far from being lukewarm, the spirituality among students at the Mennonite colleges has a depth and a genuineness that we ought to be learning from rather than lamenting.—*Robert Brenneman, Guatemala City*

I am amazed at the huge focus on the chapel services at Mennonite colleges as though somehow students attending a one-hour midweek chapel service will make a crucial difference in students' walk with Christ. I think not. Mennonite colleges have a huge opportunity to incorporate some sort of discipleship program that will make a difference. After talking with three college presidents on the issue of spirituality/discipleship at the 1999 Mennonite convention in St. Louis, I honestly think the college leadership judges that it is not possible to incorporate such a program. I know it can happen on a college campus because I experienced it firsthand at Penn State and became a Christian/disciple through such a program. If even one Mennonite college would incorporate such a discipleship program, I believe the Mennonite churches could not contain the growth.—*George Berkey, Pine City, N.Y.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT THIS PUBLICATION EXPRESSES A BIASED POINT OF VIEW WHEN IT ADVOCATES BELIEF IN GOD...
THEREFORE, IN THE INTEREST OF EQUAL TIME, I HAVE GIVEN THE FOLLOWING PANEL TO THE ATHEISTS. HERE, THEN, IS WHAT THEY STAND FOR:
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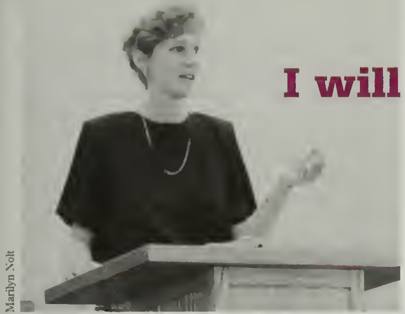

Marilyn Nolt

I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh

How do we interpret the Bible on the question of women in ministry?

by Kent Davis Sensenig

Although the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective calls men and women to all church positions, a significant portion of our congregations are not in agreement with this teaching. Given concerns about a pastor shortage on the horizon, clarifying our criteria for ministry may be critical. More importantly, it may reveal whether we are "fighting against God" on this matter, to paraphrase Gamaliel's warning to the religious leaders of his day (Acts 5:39).

As is often the case with divisive issues in the church, where you stand often boils down to how you interpret the Bible. Bible scholar Richard Hays, in *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1996, $26), offers some stimulating suggestions toward this end.

Hays delineates a fourfold process for reading God's Word: (1) reading the text (the descriptive task); (2) placing the text in canonical context (the synthetic task); (3) relating the text to our situation (the hermeneutic task); and (4) living the text (the pragmatic task).

The descriptive task: This is a challenge since the Bible comes to us in a wide array of ancient literary genres: letters, visions, wisdom, law, history, poetry, gospels. We need to know what type of literature we are dealing with when we make ethical appeals to the authority of Scripture. Hays distinguishes four "modes of appeal" in the Bible: (1) rules (such as the Ten Commandments or Jesus' "hard sayings"); (2) principles (such as the concept of Sabbath or Jubilee); (3) paradigms (stories of exemplary or reprehensible characters, such as the Good Samaritan or Ananias and Sapphira); (4) symbols (images describing God or the human condition). Since the Bible is ultimately a story of God's redemption of the world, the paradigm mode will be primary.

The synthetic task: This requires us to listen to all the voices in Scripture, not just the ones that appear to support our position. We need to acknowledge both commonalities and tensions and not harmonize away the diversity of the Bible's 66 books too easily.

Perhaps the greatest threat to a faithful reading of the Bible is that our contemporary ideology becomes a mirror reflecting only what we want to see. If you think the Bible says only one thing on a major issue, you are probably in danger of playing this mirror game.

Is there then no way to mediate the inherent tensions in the Bible? Hays suggests we balance our synthetic reading of the Bible via "focal images" that run throughout the canon and crystallize what is central to the gospel. He offers three such images: (1) *community* (the church embodies a countercultural order of discipleship); (2) *cross* (Jesus' death on the cross is our primary model for faithfulness) and (3) *new creation* (the church lives out of the power of the resurrection in the midst of a not-yet-redeemed world).

The hermeneutic task: We are to recognize that the Bible was not written in the first instance for 21st-century North Americans. As Hays points out, "Only historical ignorance or cultural chauvinism could lead us to suppose that no translation is necessary." Dangerous as it may sound, we must engage in some form of metaphor-making, some act of the imagination that places our world alongside the biblical one so that we may be shaped by it.

As children of the Reformation and a historic, Bible-believing church, we are tempted to join in Martin Luther's battle cry "sola scriptura." But "Scripture alone" is not enough and never has been. Anabaptists emphasize that (1) Jesus Christ is the ultimate Word of God, not the Bible, and (2) only those filled with the Spirit can rightly interpret Scripture. Christians over the centuries have also recognized three complementary sources of authority that help us read the Bible: tradition, reason and experience.

The pragmatic task: Finally, we have to live out the text in our community or all the rest remains religious-sounding speculation. This living-out process is a dynamic circle, as only those who live rightly can read rightly, while reading rightly empowers us to live rightly.

Using some of Hays' categories, what biblical symbols and paradigms are relevant to the role of women in the church?

continued on page 6

Perhaps the greatest threat to a faithful reading of the Bible is that our contemporary ideology becomes a mirror reflecting only what we want to see.

Symbols and paradigms

Symbols: The first account of creation in Genesis 1 reveals such a formative symbol—the image of God is both male and female. At the same time, biblical writers stress that God is not literally gendered; God is neither a man nor a woman. Thus it is idolatry to worship an exclusively male God or to grant exclusive privilege to men in doing God's work. Both men and women are commissioned to be stewards of creation (Genesis 1:27-29).

But what of Jesus' use of Abba/Father in addressing God in prayer? Jesus also commanded his followers to "call no man 'father' on earth" for only God deserves such a title (Matthew 23:9). By refusing to call any man on earth father, Jesus attacked the foundation of patriarchy in his own culture, for patriarchy is just a word that summarizes the systematic habit of calling earthly men father. In the church we can only faithfully relate to each other as brothers and sisters, equally saved by Christ. To use Jesus' Abba prayers as a justification for female subordination is to violate the spirit of Christ.

But even granting that God's original intention for men and women was mutuality, doesn't the Fall described in Genesis 3 relegate women to a God-ordained subordinate status? Only if you believe God's curses are prescriptive (saying how things ought to be) rather than descriptive (informing fallen humanity of the consequences of their sin). Why not reach toward the gospel and the reconciliation it brings between those bitterly divided in Genesis 3—animal and human, man and woman, mother and child, humans and the land? Genesis 3 tells us that domination of men over women ("your husband will rule over you") has its roots in the rebellious sinfulness of humanity.

Paradigms in the Old Testament: Beyond symbols, the Bible is also filled with stories of strong, righteous women leaders doing God's mission in the world. Deborah was called a "prophet and a leader of Israel" (Judges 4). In the role of judge she leads Israel to victory in battle. Miriam was a prophet whose song of liberation celebrates the Exodus from Egypt. (Earlier, the civil disobedience of the Hebrew midwives saved the life of Moses.) Rebekah plays a leading role in the destiny of Jacob/Israel. Queen Esther is a savior of her people who gets a book named after her, as does Ruth, perhaps the quintessential model of a faithful Israelite (despite being an alien). Rahab's uncommon courage earns her a special place among the people of God, as does Tamar's persistence in pursuit of justice, which shames the patriarch Judah into repenting of his sin and acknowledging her righteousness. These last three women get honorable mentions in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. Of course, like every traditional agrarian culture, the Israelites were deeply patriarchal, and the Bible certainly reflects this fallen reality. But that's what makes the Bible's liberationist breakthroughs all the more remarkable.

Paradigms in the New Testament: Mary and Elizabeth are both described as "filled with the Spirit," and Mary's Magnificat in Luke 1 remains a theological masterpiece, mirroring Hannah's profound declaration of faith in 1 Samuel 2. Anna is called a prophet and proclaims the Good News of Jesus in the temple after his birth (Luke 2). Jesus had many women disciples (Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Susanna are described in Luke 8 as his patrons). Two of his closest spiritual companions were Mary and Martha. The Samaritan woman is transformed into a successful Christian evangelist following her encounter with Jesus and is the first person to publicly declare Jesus the Messiah (John 4). It is Jesus' women disciples who stay with him to his end on the cross, and they are the first witnesses to his resurrection, though the male disciples refuse to believe at first. Luke highlights this tendency again when the believers disbelieve Rhoda (Acts 12) that Peter has escaped from prison.

Peter (quoting Joel) declares on Pentecost that God will "give his Spirit to everyone," both male and female, and that "your sons and daughters will prophesy" (Acts 2:17). This is confirmed throughout the church's dynamic missionary period in Acts. Lydia leads a house church and supports Paul's ministry in Philippi, and Priscilla works with Paul in evangelism and instructs the powerful preacher Apollos in "God's Way" (Acts 18:26). In Romans, Paul salutes a woman named Junia as "outstanding among the apostles" (16:7), refers to Phoebe as a minister (using the same Greek word he uses to describe himself, Apollos and Timothy) and calls Euodia and Syntyche missionary co-workers. Nympha is a house church leader, and Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa and Persis are lauded as "laborers in the Lord." In fact, 10 of 27 church leaders listed in Romans 16 are women, while 1 Timothy 3 refers to women deacons in the early church.

Peter (quoting Joel) declares on Pentecost that God will "give his Spirit to everyone," both male and female, and that "your sons and daughters will prophesy" (Acts 2:17). This is confirmed throughout Acts.

What about women keeping silent? How does the above square with Pauline passages that call for the subordination of women in the church? Given that Paul himself attests to his ongoing church-planting partnerships with women leaders, we can assume that Paul's instructions were addressed to specific situations and were not meant to be universally binding even in his own time. Paul's epistles are exactly that—letters to specific congregations and contexts. Imagine the confusion if the church in Galatia had received Paul's letter to the Corinthians. Or the Romans his message to the Philippians. Paul's letters contain eternal truths, but they are written within the time and place in which they were addressed.

Some of Paul's young congregations struggled with heresy and disorder, often of a Gnostic variety and sometimes propagated by women prophets who were disruptively unorthodox in their teaching. It is no doubt this reality that Paul and others addressed. Unfortunately, reigning in out-of-order prophets appears to have devolved into closing the door on the spiritual gifts of women.

Hays suggests that Christians have always needed the wisdom of tradition, reason and experience to help them interpret the Bible. What role do these complementary (if subordinate) sources of authority have to play in the debate over women in ministry? Given space limitations, I will address only experience.

Experience: Experience is a potentially problematic but utterly inescapable reality we bring to the table any time we interpret the Bible. It was the Spirit moving in people's personal experiences (and then confirmed by the community) that led those first Jews to call Jesus the Christ and later declare even unclean Gentiles such as Cornelius children of God.

The body of experience most relevant to our concern may be the last three decades in which we have had Mennonite women pastors. The part of the church lacking this experience would do well to listen to those who have it. I contend that such listening would reveal an overwhelmingly positive verdict on this experiment in faith. I challenge any congregation that has been served by women ministers in the last three decades to share that witness with the whole church.

I spent my junior year at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., doing study service in Washington, where program directors Jackie Sabbath and Cindy Lapp broadened my horizons and deepened my faith. Later, at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., Mary Schertz opened the New Testament to me, Marlene Kropf showed me a deeper experience of prayer and worship, and Gayle Gerber Koontz guided my appropriation of theology. Of course, Mary Oyer also taught me how to sing finer praises to God.

Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind., the first church I joined as a young adult, after years of little church involvement, was ably led by Nina Lanctot, whose gifts blessed that community for years. Recently I've watched as seminary colleague Patty Friesen and her husband have adroitly shepherded Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, through a difficult period of transition. And for the last two years I've been a pastor's husband, witnessing with respect and awe Jennifer's gifts for ministry to our little Mennonite congregation in Cedar Falls, Iowa. I have been significantly formed in Christ by women leaders.

Hays says the Bible's focal images of community, cross and new creation can help us with problematic tensions in the text. What do they say on the issue of women in the church?

Community: The issue of women in ministry should have little to do with individual ambitions. Rather it has everything to do with the collective edification and growth of the church. The apostle Paul preached that every gift given to Christians is to be used for the glory of God and the empowerment of each other.

The church will betray this trust from God if it continues to restrict the Spirit's gifts, especially in a time when we are hard pressed to find leaders who are up to the challenges of a postmodern world of great spiritual need. This is not primarily a matter of women's rights or self-expression; it is a matter of effective gospel proclamation.

Cross: The cross of Christ presents us with the divine principle of "kenosis," Jesus' self-emptying servant leadership (Philippians 2). Paul said, "In Christ ... there is no longer male and female" (Galatians 3:28). We are all called to yieldedness before God and mutual submission in imitation of Christ's pattern. If men truly loved their wives as Jesus loved the church (Ephesians 4), they would not make prideful claims to superiority and headship.

The goal of women in ministry should not be to lay claim to authoritarian power traditionally reserved for men but to transform the office into a medium for loving leadership, compassionate truth-telling and wise discernment for the flock.

New creation: Finally, the image of new creation reminds Christians that we no longer live out of the Fall but in baptism have entered a new world order of redemption. There is nothing more pagan, worldly or of the old age than the systematic subordination of women by men. Jesus commanded his followers to not lord over each other, for that is how the Gentiles behave (Matthew 20:25-26). We should not continue living "in the flesh" of institutional chauvinism but be "transformed by the renewing of [our] minds" (Romans 12:2). This will shake up every traditional domination system, beginning with the oldest form of oppression, that of men over women (remember Genesis 3). This does not mean we will not continue to be broken, flawed, wounded people who fall short of the glory of God. It does mean we can focus on what the goal is toward which we press in running the good race of Christ.

Kent Davis Sensenig is a member of Cedar Falls (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

The goal of women in ministry should not be to lay claim to authoritarian power traditionally reserved for men but to transform the office into a medium for loving leadership, compassionate truth-telling and wise discernment for the flock.

'The head of the woman is man'

A call to accept the enduring relevance of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16

by Jason J. Yoder

"In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God."

—1 Corinthians 11:11-12 NIV

While some people speak of a demise of sacred symbols, a strong case can be constructed for accepting the enduring relevance of both the principle and application advanced by Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. In abbreviated form, allow me to state why I believe the way I do.

The theme of headship is at the heart of this passage. This enduring principle is elucidated in verse 3 (NIV): "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." The equality of man and woman, clearly affirmed in Scripture, does not negate God-ordained differences between man and woman.

An application of the principle appears in verses 4 and 5: "Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is just as though her head were shaved." Admittedly, questions relating to the historical background of these verses remain. But note what is not said. Paul does not commend the practice as a temporary expedient for the sake of the gospel. Paul does not mention prostitution.

A series of arguments follows in the remaining verses of the passage. In verse 6 Paul prescribes a dramatic step for those women not willing to cover their heads with an artificial covering: Cut off the hair! In Paul's view, however, to cut off the hair is disgraceful. Consequently, the proper approach is long hair and an artificial covering.

Paul sorts through man-woman relationships in verses 7-9. The man-woman relationship is rooted in creation, prior to the fall: Woman came from man and woman was made for man. Hair length and artificial covering (or lack thereof for man) symbolically express this God-given order.

Verse 10 is notoriously difficult. But the overall thrust is discernible. The ministry of angels in the lives of Christian women is enabled or facilitated by the presence of symbolic expressions of submission to God's order—long hair and artificial covering. Is this angelic ministry to be confined only to women in the first-century Corinthian church?

Lest there be misunderstanding, Paul pauses to clarify the relationship between man and woman in God's family (vv. 11-12). The woman is not independent of the man, and the man is not independent of the woman. Each needs the other and, together, they need God.

Mind of Christ: Now Paul appeals in verse 13 to the sound judgment of his fellow believers in Corinth. This may not seem to be a very persuasive argument. But earlier in this same letter Paul makes the point that Christians have the mind of Christ. Judgment informed by the mind of Christ is not to be minimized. Paul judged in this matter and concluded as he did. He appeals to the judgment of his readers, expecting them to come to the same conclusion. Would Paul really have judged differently if he were writing in the 21st century?

Whatever one does with verses 14-15, it is apparent that Paul, in his appeal to nature, is drawing on something transcultural. Who created nature? By slighting the natural order we ultimately slight the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

Paul's final argument appears in verse 16: "If anyone wants to be contentious about this, we have no other practice—nor do the churches of God." Here, in Paul's own words, is evidence of adherence to this teaching beyond the Corinthian church.

In verse 2 Paul commends the Corinthians for holding to the teachings or traditions that he had passed on to them. In the verses that follow (3-16) it is clear that in this matter he also expects compliance from the Corinthians. It is not stretching the limits of credulity to maintain that this carefully crafted presentation is for Christians in other places and other times as well. One searches in vain for a comparable defense of slavery in the New Testament.

Burden of proof: There are additional theological and hermeneutical issues calling for attention. I will attempt to highlight several. First, the burden of proof should not automatically rest upon the one claiming that a text has ongoing validity. The question should be just as much, "Show me it's not for today" as, "Show me it's not cultural."

Second, we accept baptism, the Lord's Supper, foot washing and anointing with oil—and rightly so. All these practices are rooted in a cultural context. Why then elevate these above the Christian woman's veiling? Few if any arguments made against 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 could not also, ultimately, be leveled against baptism, the Lord's Supper, foot washing and anointing with oil.

Third, textual and pictorial material gives

evidence of early Christians heeding the teaching of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. We relish drawing on the testimony of the early Christians with regard to nonparticipation in military service. We must have the courage to look at the record of the early Christians on the use of veiling as well.

Fourth, one must question the assumption that Paul—apostle of grace—is imposing all this cultural baggage on his dear spiritual children for the sake of expediency. Paul was willing to make expedient moves on behalf of the gospel (for example, Timothy and circumcision). But is this really the story behind 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, especially when Paul painstakingly supports his argument on biblical and theological grounds? If Paul goes to this length to enforce a cultural directive, then it seems to me he comes close to perverting the gospel itself.

Fifth, it must be noted that nowhere in the passage itself does Paul speak of a "prayer veiling" or a "devotional covering." Some have concluded that since the context appears to be public worship, the covering is then, necessarily, for public worship. But this is a deduction drawn from the text and context. It is not explicitly stated in the text itself. It is possible that the teaching here was intended by Paul to be practiced consistently by Christian men and women, not just in public worship. A problem developed in public worship, so that is where Paul focused. But it does not automatically follow that it was to be practiced only in that setting. Consequently, I prefer to speak of the Christian woman's veiling that is to be worn regularly, analogous to the long hair that is not put on and taken off.

Sixth, a more discerning concept of culture is needed. For example, as Levi B. Sommers writes in the Conservative Conference magazine *Brotherhood Beacon* (September 1984), many Christians are more open to the cultural symbol of a wedding band than a "cultural" symbol of headship drawn from the pages of the New Testament. Evidence of culture in a biblical passage does not automatically give liberty to uncritically discard the cultural layer and preserve the essence. Like an onion, the layers may be taken off only to discover that nothing is left.

Cultural conditioning: Seventh, it is important to be aware of the cultural conditioning of the biblical writings. But the knife cuts both ways. Are we prepared to grasp the extent to which our understanding of the Bible is conditioned by the cultural milieu of the 21st century? Those who view headship and its symbolic expression as ancient relics best left in the first century need to be reminded of the possibility that Paul was indeed speaking a sure word from the Lord meant to challenge the cultural captivity of any era.

Eighth, if one rejects not only the symbolic application but also the principle itself, it may justifiably be asked what it would take to persuade. Does Paul not speak clearly enough? If not, what would a convincing argument look like? It is possible that some may not care for the content of this passage no matter how it is packaged.

Finally, if we do not accept either the principle of headship or its symbolic expression as outlined in this passage, what are we left with? It would seem we are left with the views of an eccentric first-century Jew and an example of his effort to bring the troops into line. Verses 11-12 will also be of value to many because they fit their theology. But what else? Any method of interpretation that effectively sucks a passage dry of a positive and constructive message for the church of Christ is suspect.

Whatever happened to 1 Corinthians 11:2-16? It is still there and through it God still speaks to his people for his glory and their good. Are we listening? Can we say, as in Psalm 119:45, "I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts"?

Jason J. Yoder is involved at Sangre de Cristo Mennonite Church, Westcliffe, Colo.

Those who view headship and its symbolic expression as ancient relics best left in the first century need to be reminded of the possibility that Paul was indeed speaking a sure word from the Lord meant to challenge the cultural captivity of any era.

Turning meetings into holy ground

New approach integrates church's worship, business

Laurie L. Oswald

When we incorporate faith practices throughout the whole meeting, it transforms all that we do.

—Brenda Glanzer Lilliston

Mennonites are good at meetings. But how good are meetings for Mennonites?

"It's not uncommon to hear people say, at the end of their terms on church boards, 'I'm glad that's over' or, 'Never again,' " says Brenda Glanzer Lilliston of Wichita, Kan. "You hope for something faith-building and instead it can turn out to be faith-draining. Sometimes you actually see people end up on the periphery of the church when their term is over. But it doesn't have to be this way."

An ordained General Conference Mennonite Church minister, she is a free-lance consultant in the area of spiritual growth, including a concept for groups called Worshipful Work. The term and concept grew out of a four-year ecumenical study. Directed by Charles Olsen, an ordained Presbyterian minister, it was aimed at developing and revitalizing church councils and boards through integration of spirituality and administration.

Lilliston first heard of Worshipful Work while serving as a chaplain at a Wichita hospital. A colleague spoke enthusiastically about a church meeting where Worshipful Work methods had been used. "She was so excited," Lilliston says. "She said there was a different sense to the meeting, a real life in it."

Since then, Lilliston has taken part in Worshipful Work trainings and is now a consultant mentor who can train others. She and Jonathan Smith, associate pastor at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church, have served as Worshipful Work facilitators at area conference sessions and Constituency Leaders Council meetings. Lilliston and Smith will also be Worshipful Work facilitators at this summer's churchwide convention in Nashville, Tenn.

"Over time, Worshipful Work means a shift from doing business strictly according to the corporate model [such as parliamentary procedure] to taking time to prayerfully discern what is God's yearning for us in this time and place," Lilliston says. "Doing business is an important part of the life of the church, and when we integrate worship and business, our meetings become holy ground.

"When we incorporate faith practices throughout the whole meeting, it transforms all that we do."

Some of those practices include sharing stories of God "moving in our church, or in our lives, in the past week or since the last meeting," she says.

Other practices, Lilliston says, include "reflecting on the Bible when we are making big decisions and asking how the Bible informs our life as a church today. Or taking time for silence in the middle of the meeting, especially if things are getting heated, to listen to what God is saying."

Last summer's joint South Central Conference-Western District Conference assembly was Lilliston's and Smith's debut as Worshipful Work facilitators.

"We were present up front with the moderators and were given permission to include spiritual practices and worship elements in the meeting," Lilliston says. "We each made use of a listening committee to help us listen for God's movement in the meetings.

"It could mean singing part of a hymn after a report had been given. Or when the issue of abortion came up, there was a wide range of opinion on how we should address it, but we all agreed that abortion was wrong. So we had the group offer silent prayers of lament over the abortions that are happening in our country."

Similar practices will be found at the Nashville delegate sessions. "The program and worship committees have already done a lot of good planning," Lilliston says. "For example, they are beginning each day with worship; an important part of what a Worshipful Work facilitator does is listening to the themes of worship and bringing those into the business meetings."

In the next few months, Lilliston will teach and model Worshipful Work at the local level. She has already done a workshop in Colorado with more planned for Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. She has also applied some of the principles of Worshipful Work in her own congregation, Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita.

"We have gone through a discernment process regarding facility issues, and it has ended up a very positive experience," Lilliston says. "People have said to me, 'This feels different. We took time to become attuned to God in our midst.' They've said, 'This is a way of decision making we want to use again.' " *—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Toward a peaceful Indonesian society

University personnel offer hope in turbulent times

YOGYAKARTA, Indonesia—Economic, political and religious upheaval in Indonesia is unraveling traditional society, leaving its young to search for new threads of meaning. Two Mennonites among the administrators and faculty at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta are striving to help them find those threads and weave new patterns for a hopeful future.

Aristarchus Sukarto, the university rector, or president, and Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) director of peace programs for Indonesia and a conflict transformation specialist who teaches peacemaking, help Duta Wacana students form a biblical understanding of how to develop a peaceful society. They also help students evaluate Western values, which are rapidly entering Indonesia through media and globalization, and integrate them into Eastern culture.

On either front, forming Christian values and critical-thinking skills in a rapidly changing world is a challenge.

"We've been in the middle of a big transition in this society in the last 10 or 15 years, and the students are losing their frame of reference," Aristarchus says.

Indonesia's turmoil, sparked by struggles to move from dictatorial rule to more of a democracy, has led some young people not only to question old values but also to rebel without applying balance, Ruth-Heffelbower says.

"In the West, we have the attitude that as individuals, we are someone apart from everyone else," he says. "In the East, there's the attitude that I am nothing apart from the group, the community, the family. We're striving to help students strike a balance, to see that they're someone in relation to those around them."

Says Aristarchus: " We're trying to shape the idea of what a true peaceful community is. In the old way, that means everyone stays in their place but doesn't honestly communicate. In our modern situation, we want them to see that it's more about coexisting, as we openly share our views."

Shaping this community is a multifaceted task, given Duta Wacana's diversity. About 85 percent of the university's 3,300 students represent 12 Christian denominations, including Mennonite, other Protestant and Catholic. About 12 percent are Muslim. The rest are Buddhist and Hindu.

Duta Wacana is one of about 100 universities in Yogyakarta. The city, the seat of Javanese culture and learning, is known for its high-quality higher education on the island of Java.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower visits with Aristarchus Sukarto. Mennonites have been active in providing peace education at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Aristarchus is the rector, and Ruth-Heffelbower, a Mennonite Central Committee worker, teaches peacemaking.

> **We're trying to shape the idea of what a true peaceful community is.**
>
> *—Aristarchus Sukarto*

In 1986, the rector at the time sensed turmoil would brew in Indonesia in the next decades and established the peace center. Aristarchus also helped introduce peace studies. The program fluctuated in quality in its first years, he said. To strengthen the program, he asked MCC if it could send personnel to help staff it. In fall 1999, Ruth-Heffelbower joined the staff.

Ruth-Heffelbower's main job is to build capacity for others to become peacemakers, not to do the peacemaking for them, he said. His goal is to train at least 12 faculty who can do conflict transformation work in troubled communities across Indonesia. In May 2000, Ruth-Heffelbower took some trainees to West Papua, formerly Irian Jaya, to help a group of churches with Dutch Reformed roots resolve conflicts over independence and counter-independence issues and Muslim-Christian tensions.

"My job is to ... get [Indonesians] ready to do the kind of stuff I do," he says. "Because I'll be gone, and they'll have to do it.

"My leaving will be a gift to them."*—Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

Indonesian synods exploring more cooperation

Indonesia's three Mennonite synods are looking at ways to increase and formalize their cooperative endeavors.

Representatives from the three synods—GITJ, GKMI and JKI—recently held a summit where they appointed a three-person committee to develop plans for a joint association of their groups. Current cooperative efforts include the International Visitor Exchange Program, Indonesian Mennonite Discipleship Training and youth camps.

The GITJ is the largest synod, with 65,000 members, followed by the GKMI, with 16,000 and the JKI, with 6,500.*—MWC News Service*

Service workers swim against the current

JOHNSTOWN, Pa.—This city of 27,000 is best known for the floods of 1889, 1936 and 1977 that ended thousands of lives and cost millions of dollars in property damage. Today, though, the city is threatened by a trickle.

"So many people move out to go to school, to get a job," says Bill Brubaker, the leader of the Johnstown Service Adventure unit. "Since the steel mills and the coal mines closed, this area has had one of the highest unemployment rates in the state. The population in Johnstown itself drops each year."

Out of this context, in 1998, nine area Mennonite congregations joined to support a Service Adventure unit and, in a small way, to reverse the stream of people leaving. For the past three years, five volunteers have moved into Johnstown, serving in day-care, Head Start and after-school programs as well as helping out in area Christian schools and church youth groups.

"The [volunteers] come and make a difference in people's lives," says Mary Spory, one of the unit support committee members. "There's not a lot of permanency in some of these kids' lives. Moms leave, dads leave—there are a lot of people leaving.

"Having the unit house is really important," she says, because children often visit the house, creating longer-term relationships.

"We're there to listen, to give hugs, to be someone to say 'good job' on their report card," says Kristy Letkeman, a unit member who works with 30 to 40 kids each afternoon in an after-school program called New Day Inc. "There are so many different personalities you need to learn to work with in different ways, but you still love them all the same. Once the kids get home at night, they might not be in a particularly caring environment."

Together with congregational members, the unit also runs a program called Friday Night Kids, which provides Christian-oriented activities for neighborhood youth each Friday night.

Most of the Service Adventure participants move on after their year in Johnstown. But for Joe Peckman, who is enrolled in a local university but lives and volunteers in Johnstown, the experience inspired him to set down roots.

"I moved away, but I couldn't live without Johnstown, so I came back," says Peckman, a member of the first unit in 1998. "While I was in Service Adventure, it became clear to me that service is not something you do and then move on. For me to be most satisfied, it can't be about me; it has to be about others. And the best place for me is here."

Service Adventure is a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions.—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

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When a poverty alleviation program in Tanzania issued a call for metal pushcarts, Edward Shoo wanted to make a bid for the job. But where would the low income business owner get the money to stock up on the components he needed? Not from a bank. "It's difficult for someone at my level to get credit at banks," he says.

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MCC soliciting relief kits after Salvadoran quakes

AKRON, Pa.—Following major earthquakes in El Salvador on Jan. 13 and Feb. 13, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is requesting 5,000 relief kits for distribution to the most needy families.

The quakes and continuing tremors have left one-sixth of El Salvador's 6.2 million people homeless. With the rainy season only a few weeks away, Salvadorans need basic hygiene supplies to prevent the spread of diseases. Some 300 relief kits, compiled from supplies in stock, are already being distributed.

MCC requests the following be placed in a box and delivered to the nearest collection site:

- four bars of soap;
- one plastic bottle of shampoo, 13 to 24 ounces, placed in a plastic bag;
- 10 cups of powdered laundry detergent, double-bagged in one-gallon plastic bags;
- one squeeze tube of toothpaste, minimum eight ounces;
- four adult-size toothbrushes, leave in packaging;
- four new bath towels, medium weight, not white;
- one each hairbrush, wide-tooth comb and fingernail clipper;
- one box adhesive bandages, minimum 40, assorted preferred;
- one package of 18 to 24 sanitary pads, thin maxi or ultra thin;
- one envelope with a $10 check, to be used for shipping and a Spanish-language Bible. Make the check payable to MCC. Cards and letters are also appreciated.

For the location of the nearest MCC collection site, call toll-free 877-517-5673.

If more than 5,000 kits are received, they will be placed in inventory for future disasters. MCC is also accepting contributions for post-earthquake reconstruction.—*MCC News Service*

Light in the darkness

Melissa Sobraski, a senior at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind., lights a candle Feb. 27 during one of the school's Spiritual Life Week events.

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this date in Mennonite history

March 13, 1888—Maggie Leonard becomes the first convert of General Conference Mennonite Church mission work among the Cheyenne and Arapaho in Oklahoma.

Bethel president to stay up to one more year

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College president Douglas Penner, who had earlier announced that he would not accept another three-year term, has agreed to extend his presidency by up to one year. In the meantime, the search for a successor continues.

Penner was due to complete his second three-year term on June 30. But the college board of directors, meeting March 1-3, opted to extend Penner's contract by up to one year pending the selection of a new president.

"This has been an important time of rebuilding and restoration for Bethel College," says board chair Keith Harder. "[Penner's] willingness to assist Bethel during this time of transition will serve the college well.

"The search committee's work is going very well. However, committee members believe that if additional time can be offered to potential candidates, this will assist the search process."

MEDA honored for work in Haiti, Pennsylvania

WINNIPEG—Two Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) programs have been recognized for their approaches to serving low-income people.

MEDA's Community Bank Program in Haiti was honored by the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest for its efforts "to provide a more equitable and sustainable basis to the development of community banks." CGAP is a consortium of 27 donor agencies that support microfinance programs around the world.

In Pennsylvania, MEDA's ASSETS Lancaster program was among 10 nonprofit organizations recognized as the most innovative by *Central Penn Business Journal.* ASSETS Lancaster was established in 1995 to assist low-income entrepreneurs. More than 75 percent of program graduates who started a business with help from ASSETS Lancaster are still in business today. MEDA has eight such training programs in the United States.—*MEDA News Service*

Goshen student selected for service conference

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College junior Jacob Liechty's commitment to service has taken him to Mali, Mexico and South Dakota. Now he is bound for Racine, Wis.

Liechty is one of 30 students chosen from across the United States to participate in "Educated for Public Purpose: A National Student Dialogue on Civic Participation," a national conference to be held March 15-17. Liechty's presentation will emphasize that real service recognizes emotional needs as well as physical ones.

"It's still useful to drill a well for someone where a well is needed," says Liechty, who grew up in Dublin, Ireland. "But I think it's more valuable if you have a relationship with them and you know them. And … you should recognize that other people are giving service to you at the same time."

Wave of mission

EMM photo by Shane Knudsen

Ruth Hornberger of Eastern Mennonite Missions' Baltimore Discipleship Center and Keith Blank, director of EMM Discipleship Ministries, wave flags as part of a commissioning service for 37 new participants in EMM's Youth Evangelism Service. The Feb. 11 service was held in Lancaster, Pa. The new YES teams will go to Central Asia, France, Thailand and Latin America.

Correction: The fifth largest Mennonite Church USA congregation is Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., with 782 members. The list in the Feb. 27 issue was incorrect.

Events

Michiana Anabaptist Historians spring meeting, March 24, 9 a.m., Bethel College, Mishawaka, Ind. Contact 219-533-7819.

Workers

Bauman, Rance, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) term in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as a social worker and teacher.

Blank, Keith, Landisville, Pa., has been named representative to Europe for Global Ministries of Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM). He still remains as Discipleship Ministries director.

Elizondo, Nathan, Sanger, Calif., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Reedley, Calif., as material resource coordinator for MCC West Coast.

Gullman, Dave, was ordained Jan. 7 at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va., as pastor for Pleasant View Inc., Broadway, serving adults with developmental disabilities.

Hartman, Christina, Elida, Ohio, has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as administrative assistant for Peace and Justice Ministries.

Hershey, Dwayne and Vivana, Lancaster, Pa., this summer will begin a three-year EMM associate missionary term of service in central Asia.

Hurst, Mark and Mary, Ephrata, Pa., have begun an EMM term in Sydney, Australia, working with the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand.

Kurtz, Paula, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Ephrata, Pa., as store manager for the Ten Thousand Villages store there.

Lumeya, Fidele and Krista Rigalo, Crystal River, Fla., in June will begin a three-year MCC assignment in Angola working as peace builders for Angolan Churches Council.

Moore, Theresa, Lancaster, Pa., has begun an MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as pricing supervisor for Ten Thousand Villages.

Oberholtzer, Kristin and Trace, Lancaster, Pa., this summer will begin a three-year EMM co-missionary term with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions as church planters in Bari, Italy.

Shellenberger, Evelyn and Wallace, Paoli, Ind., are beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Iran working with the Iran Student Exchange program.

Short, Laura, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Geneva, Switzerland, as a consultant to the Decade to Overcome Violence project with World Council of Churches.

Wright, Chris, was ordained Feb. 25 as youth pastor of First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill.

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Births

Bentch, Emma Dorothy, Feb. 21, to Lorri (Rutt) and Timothy Bentch, Szeged, Hungary.

Dyck, Ryan Alexander, Feb. 12, to Angela (Rempel) and Gord Dyck, Killarney, Man.

Goertzen, Delaney Anne, Feb. 12, to Kendra (Adam) and Tim Goertzen, Woodbury, Minn.

Kauffman, Bryce Mitchell, Feb. 15, to Lisa (Moyer) and Steven Kauffman, Telford, Pa.

McIlvaine, Claire Janae, Feb. 2, to David II and Joanne (Groff) McIlvaine, Lancaster, Pa.

Moyer, Michael Christopher, Feb. 23, to Terri and Thomas Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Nussbaum, Brendan Grant, Feb. 14, to Chad and Michelle (Weaver) Nussbaum, McGaheysville, Va.

Schnacker, Ellen Christine, Feb. 20, to Janet (Thieszen) and Perry Schnacker, Shawnee, Kan.

Smith, Miriam Rose, Sept. 7, 2000, received for adoption Feb. 16, 2001, by Daniel and Nancy Smith, Goshen, Ind.

Steinmetz, Jackson David, Feb. 7, to Joel and Teri Steinmetz, Bluffton, Ohio.

Marriages

Detweiler/Gahman: Warren Detweiler, Perkasie, Pa., and Mary Emma Gahman, Pipersville, Pa., Feb. 10 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie.

Gasiorek/Lawrence: Yvette Gasiorek, Tucson, Ariz., and Justin Lawrence, Tucson, July 29, 2000, at Capetown, South Africa; U. S. wedding Feb. 18, 2001, at Koinonia Mennonite Church, Chandler, Ariz.

Rediger/Reimer: Ruth Sutter Rediger, Wayland, Iowa, and Hugo Reimer, North Newton, Kan., Feb. 18 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Deaths

Beller, Ruth Schrag, 91, Lowville, N.Y., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Alvin Beller (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Magdalena Martin Schrag (deceased). Survivors: daughter Lois Anneler; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service to be held prior to burial in the spring.

Friesen, Waldo, 88, Henderson, Neb., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Margaret Friesen (deceased). Parents: Peter and Katharina Doell Friesen (deceased). Survivors: children LeRoy, Dorothy Gibson; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Landis, Ainwood, 78, Perkasie, Pa., died Jan. 26. Spouse: Sara Meyers Landis. Parents: Howard and Alice Landis (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Lynn Ferry, Sally Oswald, Jay; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie.

Landis, Robert, 91, Lancaster, Pa., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Kathryn Shenk Landis (deceased). Parents: Edwin and Emma Weaver Landis (deceased). Survivors: children Harold, Nancy Martin, Roberta Herr; 12 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Lancaster.

Lichti, Pearl Birkey Garber, 83, Hesston, Kan., died Feb. 16. Spouse: Leonard Lichti. Parents: John and Lena Oyer Birkey (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Roger, Norman, Thomas, Loren, Vernelda Hartzler, Noreen Penner, Adelma Isbanioly, Joy Rogers, Carol Birch, Jan Nichols; 25 stepgrandchildren; 14 step-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 20 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Lugibihl, Ruby Lehman, 73, Pandora, Ohio, died Jan. 22 of liver failure. Spouse: Gordon Lugibihl (deceased). Parents: Peter and Eunice Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Paula, Garth, Bruce. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Pandora.

Miller, Galen Robert, 77, Berlin, Ohio, died Feb. 17. Spouse: Carley June Erb Miller. Parents: Alvin and Sevilla Miller Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Scott, Duane, Donald, Marla Graber, Gretchen Vasquez; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 24 at Berlin Mennonite Church.

Swartley, Vernon, 54, Quakertown, Pa., died Feb. 4 of cancer. Spouse: Nancy Oswald Swartley. Parents: Vernon and Dorothy Swartley. Other survivors: children Timothy, Eric. Memorial service: Feb. 11 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.

Yoder, Chester, 90, Mattawana, Pa., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Margaret Harshbarger Yoder (deceased). Parents: Jesse and Sadie Yoder (deceased). Survivors: daughter Lois Zook; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16, Mattawana Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Freeman, S.D., is seeking an ***associate pastor*** to fill a half-time position with an emphasis on family life and youth ministry. Collegiate or seminary pastoral training preferred but not required.

  Direct inquiries and resumes to Rudy Brockmueller, 28458 - 442nd Ave., Freeman, SD 57029; 605-925-4542; email <brock@gwtc.net>.

- **Raleigh Mennonite Church**, <http://rtpnet.org/~rmc>, Raleigh, N.C., a vibrant, urban congregation, invites applicants for two half-time positions: ***youth pastor*** and ***congregational peace center director***. Couples, minorities and women are especially encouraged to apply. Positions available this summer.

  Please send cover letter and resume indicating areas of interest to Raleigh Mennonite Church, Attn. Jon Friesen, P.O. Box 25545, Raleigh, NC 27611-5545; email <friesen@intrex.net>.

- **Service Adventure**, a 10-1/2 month service-learning program for young adults ages 17-20, needs ***experienced leaders***. Skills desired: mentoring, spiritual nurturing, conflict resolution. Benefits: pre-assignment training, room/board, vacation, strong support system. Two-year term. Minimum age: 24. Accepting applications for fall 2001 in Albuquerque, N.M.; Champaign, Ill.; Johnstown, Pa.; Lethbridge, Alta.; Raleigh, N.C.

  Contact Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email <ServiceAdventure@MBM.org>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks a ***director of communications:*** a full-time position in communications and integrated marketing to promote the college's mission and vision. In addition to writing and managing news releases and editing the alumni magazine, responsibilities include working with the administration and faculty to plan and implement a comprehensive program promoting the image and programs of the college to all relevant constituencies. The director sets strategic communication direction and works with internal and external partners to build relationships for the college. Management responsibilities include oversight of publications, printed materials, sports information and the college web site. A master's degree and experience in communications or related field preferred. Evidence of strong interpersonal and management skills required. Candidates must have knowledge of the college's constituencies and be supportive of its mission.

  A letter of application with a resume and list of references may be sent to Julie Krupp, Director of Human Resources, 280 W. College Ave. Suite 1, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; <kruppj@bluffton.edu>. AA/EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Application review will begin immediately.

- **Crooked Creek Christian Camp**, a rapidly growing Mennonite camp located in southeastern Iowa, seeks an ***administrator***, starting Aug. 1, 2001.

  Send resume and inquiries to Edwin D. Miller, 837 3rd Pl., Kalona, IA 52247; email <edmmjm@kctc.net>.

- **Shalom Community Church**, Ann Arbor, Mich., a Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregation in a thriving, large university setting, seeks candidates for a full-time ***pastor*** position.

  For more information or to apply, contact Search Committee, 3578 Lamplighter, Ann Arbor, MI 48103; 734-761-7366; email <showalterh@aol.com>; <http://www.shalomcommunitychurch.mi.us.mennonite.net/>.

- **Park View Mennonite Church**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks a full-time ***associate pastor for pastoral care***, nurture, small groups, visitation, outreach and occasional worship leading and preaching, and a half-time ***associate pastor for children's ministries*** and adult Sunday school. Available summer 2001. Reply to Search Committee, c/o Freda Redekop, 3425 Flint Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801; email <credekop@rica.net>.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. For information, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, Mount Pleasant, Pa., seeks a ***program director***. Full-time position to begin July 15, 2001. Unique ministry opportunity for creative, visionary person with business, programming, marketing and theology background. Responsible to executive director. Salary with benefits including health insurance.

  Contact Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, 1-800-839-1021 to request application, or visit our web site at <www.laurelville.org> to print application, or email <info@laurelville.org>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a nonprofit, fair-trade organization, is currently recruiting for a ***marketing and development trainer*** located at our headquarters in Akron, Pa. The successful candidate must have experience and/or training in marketing or retail environment as well as in strategic planning and project management. Be an integral and exciting part of the fair-trade industry by joining our team of professional staff that is making a difference.

  For more information, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Goshen College** is inviting applications for a one-year position in the ***biology department***. Ph.D. or near completion of Ph.D. preferred. The position will require teaching two semesters of Biological Principles (first-year biology for majors), a nonmajors course in human biology and two of the following four courses: botany, senior seminar, genetics or General Biology for nonmajors.

  Please send a letter of application, resume and a list of three references to Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <Dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <http://www.goshen.edu> under "Employment." Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

- **Goshen College** has an opening for a ***residence hall director*** beginning August 2001 for an ongoing 9½-month contract. Bachelor's degree required (master's degree preferred) with a minimum of two years of post-baccalaureate-related work experience. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups and women are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application, resume and three letters of reference to David Janzen, Director of Human Resources, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060. Also complete Personnel Information Form at <www.goshen.edu/employment/personl.html>. Questions? Contact David Janzen at 219-535-7507; email <davidpj@goshen.edu>. Applications will be received until April 1 or until the position is filled.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** has two full-time positions available for mission-minded people at dynamic, multifaceted camp ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church:

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Or email <theMennonite@ mph.org>.

by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Being There: The Bible Through Simulation—Book 1: Beginnings (Faith & Life Resources, 2001, $15.95) is the first of a series of five books intended to be used in conjunction with Generation Why youth Bible studies or as stand-alone events. It contains three simulations: "What Happened in the Garden?" (Genesis 2-3), "The Wisemen" (Matthew 2) and "The House Church" (Philemon).

During Lent, which began Feb. 28, Goshen (Ind.) College professors, staff members and students are offering daily reflections based on lectionary Scripture passages, available online through <www.goshen.edu>.

Foreign Aid to End Hunger, Bread for the World's 11th annual report on the state of world hunger, will be released March 21. It tells how effective, poverty-focused aid could cut hunger dramatically—especially in Africa—by investing in agriculture, education, infrastructure, microenterprise, debt relief and health care. Contact BFW at 50 F St. NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20001, 202-639-9400, <www.bread.org>.

Common Sense for Board Members: 40 Essays About Board Service by Edgar Stoesz (Good Books, 2000, $8.95) shows how to have one's board service be both effective and rewarding.

Children at Risk: Networks in Action by Patrick McDonald with Emma Garrow (World Vision Publications, 2001, $12.95) provides practical suggestions enabling Christians to mobilize their resources and offer a better future to the world's children.

Why Aren't We Satisfied? by Clifford Williams (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $12.95) is for those, writes the author, "who pause now and then in life's mad rush to think quietly about where they're headed."

Why I Am a Conscientious Objector by John M. Drescher (Masthof Press, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543, 2001, $5.95 plus $2.50 shipping) is a reprint revised and expanded by the author.

Reality Check: A Survival Manual for Christians in the Workplace by Verla Gillmor (Horizon Books, 2001, $11.99) offers realistic, credible wisdom and encouragement on how to integrate faith with life on the job.

Build a Better World! Activities for Children from Church World Service is a four-session curriculum for vacation church school or Sunday school. It features stories of children assisted through the work of CWS along with a related Bible study and hands-on activities. Up to 10 copies are available for no charge. To order call 800-297-1516.

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Punishment by T. Richard Snyder (Eerdmans, 2001, $18) asserts that the punitive spirit so prevalent in our response to crime is significantly rooted in and reinforced by the popular Christian understandings of human nature and God's grace, both of which are distortions of the originating Judeo-Christian traditions.

He Was Here: Those Who Knew Jesus Speak by Ivan J. Kauffman (Brazos Press, 2001, $14.99) tells stories of people Jesus touched: the innkeeper, the man born blind, Nicodemus and Pilate's wife.

Church Planting: Laying Foundations by Stuart Murray (Herald Press, 2001, $19.99) lays some theological foundations for church planting and invites church planters to think seriously about missiology and ecclesiology. The book is not a training manual. It is for practitioners rather than theorists. It contains many questions and considers various answers.

Recommended reading

The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspective **by R. Paul Stevens (Eerdmans, 2000, $24) is a biblical, theological and historical consideration of work. Stevens calls it "a theology for homemakers, nurses and doctors, plumbers, stockbrokers, politicians and farmers." While it can be thick reading at times for the general reader—e.g., when applying the doctrine of the Trinity—the topic is important to everyone. We all work at something and tend to find our identity in what we do. All God's people are called to ministry, Stevens argues, and that ministry includes our work in the world, not just in our church buildings. Especially helpful are discussion starters at the end of each chapter.—*gh***

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Everett J. Thomas

Yes and no is the grace

There are profound differences of conviction across our church about the role of women in leadership and in family life. In this issue we publish two articles (pages 5 and 8) that support disparate points of view about the role of women in the church and the implications for ordination. The emerging Mennonite Church in both the United States and Canada has found a way to manage such polar opposite perspectives. While other controversies seem to pull us apart, on this matter we live with deliberate ambiguity.

Article 15 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective is clear about what the emerging Mennonite Church teaches: "The church calls, trains and appoints men and women to a variety of leadership ministries on its behalf. These may include such offices as pastor, deacon and elder as well as evangelists, missionaries, teachers, conference ministers and overseers."

Before launching into a thorough explanation of licensing and ordination, *A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership* explains that "women and men may be granted credentials for Christian ministry." It is clear that our governing documents call the new church to leave all roles in the church, including the pastorate, open to women as well as men.

Yet there are many members of our church who do not concur. When North Central Conference went on record to affirm the 1995 confession of faith, it also expressed its disappointment that the confession does not preclude women from serving as pastors.

Lancaster Conference has seen a number of its congregations withdraw in recent years, in part because of a concern that the conference might eventually ordain women. After a difficult discernment process in 1999 and 2000, this conference decided to reserve the roles of lead pastor and oversight ministry for men. Women, however, can be granted licenses for specific ministries, including that of associate pastor.

These and some other area conferences retain traditional beliefs on the matter of ordination for women. These groups sometimes point out that they have not changed, but rather the rest of the church has changed. Because these parts of the church retain the convictions of past confessions of faith, the membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA do not make fidelity with Article 15 a requirement for those wishing to join the new denomination.

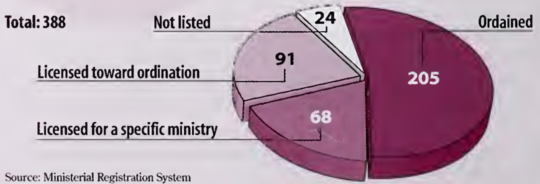
Consequently, it is around the issue of ordaining women that we have a helpful example of tolerance in the church today. In Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada there are now 388 women who carry a ministerial credential (see chart below left), which is nearly 11 percent of all those who are licensed or ordained.

Over the past 10 years, I have been pastored by ministerial teams which include both women and men. On these teams, Jane Stoltzfus Buller, Nancy Kauffmann and Klaudia Brady Smucker preached sermons in a voice that men do not have. The Scriptures are enriched when I hear them from a woman's perspective. It would now be difficult for me to be in a congregation which does not allow both women and men to preach the Word.

Nevertheless, there are many in our church who believe just as devoutly that only men should be ordained to preach. It may be that their perspective is actually the majority's point of view. So we agree to disagree. We live with the ambiguity. We do not find ourselves dividing churchwide around this issue.

For this grace I thank God. May the generosity of spirit we demonstrate on this matter be instructive to us on other matters. The point is that on many issues it is appropriate for some to say no while others say yes.—*ejt*

Mennonite Church
Ordained and licensed women



Source: Ministerial Registration System

the Mennonite

March 20, 2001

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lessons from a pilgrimage in Ireland

page 4

6 Meditation: not so mysterious
8 Publishing has hard issues to cover
9 Reaching ex-gang members in Honduras
16 Cards, notes and insights from readers

The Center of community

A hearty affirmation to Walter Sawatsky's response to Stuart Murray's call for a "more relaxed approach to membership rules" ("Return to Anabaptist Roots for Church Planting, Speaker Tells Evangelism Council Participants," March 6). I am increasingly distressed by the growing mood in the church to return to being a bounded church that focuses on litmus tests for who may and may not be members and leaders.

I fear that we are returning to the horrors of excommunicating, banning and shunning that erupted in the 18th-century, Jacob Amman era in South Germany and France and has deeply affected the Mennonite church from time to time in North America. I pray that we are not returning to the 1920s, when controversies over doctrine forced the closing of Goshen (Ind.) College for a time, divided churches, put many leaders under censure and caused people to leave the church.

I long for us all to return to a focus on the Center, our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone is worthy to be ultimate judge of the living and the dead. I want to be part of a church that introduces people to Jesus, prays for and teaches a transformed life in Christ and then allows the Spirit of Jesus full freedom, aided by the loving counsel of sisters and brothers, to draw people toward faithfulness. I want to be part of a church where congregations are trusted, again with loving counsel from neighbor congregations, to discern the paths of faithfulness appropriate for members. I hope and pray that in the current contradictory movements toward transformation and more rigid boundary setting, the stream of positive, dynamic transformation in Jesus Christ may be the one that claims our energy and loyalty.
—Art Smoker, Goshen, Ind.

Sharon works in the Quality Standards division at Hazelden Foundation, a rehabilitation facility for drug and alcohol abuse in Center City, Minn. This year Hazelden published a calendar titled, "Christian Acts of Kindness." The Feb. 10 page reads, "Real communities have to be built, and one of the most important parts is a willingness to accept and even celebrate differences." We think this is important to remember as the Mennonite church works together to build a community. Hazelden's motto is, "Dignity and respect for everyone."
—Steve and Sharon Pankratz, Lindstrom, Minn.

Racism responses

Thank you for your well-focused and provocative issue calling us to deal with racism (Feb. 27). I especially liked the emphasis of being "spiritually grounded," as identified in Rachel Beth Miller's interview with Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Tobin Miller Shearer ("Spiritually Grounded Anti-Racism"). Surely our ability—as individuals and as a church—to deal with racism will grow out of our being authentically grounded in Jesus.

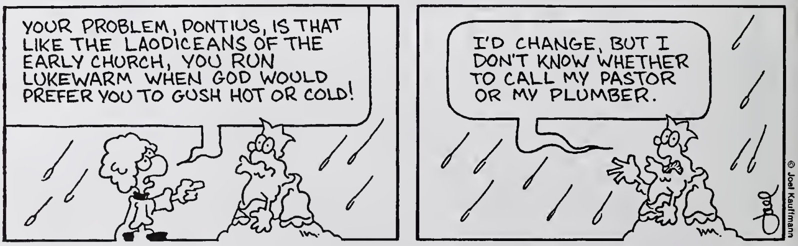
As a parent, I greatly appreciated the contribution that Art and Pat McFarlane made in 1999 to my son David (and his spouse, Amber) in premarital counseling. Another personal blessing has been to participate with Tobin in worship and sharing as a fellow member of East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

I extend heartfelt thanks to Art, Pat, Regina and Tobin for raising our awareness about racism and for pointing us to a better way.
—Glen A. Roth, Lancaster, Pa.

The editorial "Safe at First" is rightly concerned with racism, more specifically white racism. I believe this term would serve us bet-

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


YOUR PROBLEM, PONTIUS, IS THAT LIKE THE LAODICEANS OF THE EARLY CHURCH, YOU RUN LUKEWARM WHEN GOD WOULD PREFER YOU TO GUSH HOT OR COLD!
I'D CHANGE, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CALL MY PASTOR OR MY PLUMBER.
© Joel Kauffmann

theMennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
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y readers say

ter than a definition of racism requiring a certain kind of power. The definition used is in no dictionary and is sculpted to make it difficult to talk of racism of minorities. The definition discriminates. It is racist. It looks like an effort to spare minorities the price of a pejorative. If someone says the O.J. Simpson jury was racist, the meaning is clear and clean according to Webster. The meaning should not be held hostage to a discussion of the nature of power. *—Allen Stoltzfus, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Best-selling evangelism

I thought I would respond to the recent letter calling the "Left Behind" series trash (Readers Say, Feb. 13). I spent a year in voluntary service with Choice Books in 1998. I serviced Meijer stores in suburban Detroit and Cincinnati. That series sold well. I am convinced there are non-Christians buying these books who probably would not buy a book on Bible prophecy written by the various evangelical experts. One person's trash is another person's treasure. I am thankful that some Christian-oriented books are making the *New York Times* best-seller list.*—Perry Lehman, Columbus, Ohio*

Down the toilet

Re Wider World, Feb. 27: Thomas Crapper was indeed an English plumber, and he was born in 1836. However, reliable sources, including an article in the June 1993 issue of *Plumbing and Mechanical*, agree that he did not invent the flush toilet. Neither was the inventor named John. The British patent for the flush mechanism was issued in 1819 to an Albert Giblin. It is believed that the erroneous legend arose because Crapper's plumbing supply business sold commodes bearing the company name.*—Lamarr Widmer, Dillsburg, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

A pilgrimage parable

Lessons from a pilgrim hike in Ireland

by Arthur Paul Boers

Before my trip, I stopped in at an unfamiliar barbershop, a macho place, it turned out, with pin-up girl calendars and a barber wearing a shirt displaying *Playboy* covers. (I didn't know there were such shirts.) When I told him I was going to Britain, his only question was, "Do you drink?" I failed to say I was going as a pilgrim.

Pilgrims travel with the purpose of praying, being aware of God and hoping to meet God in new ways. I wanted to explore the ancient Christian faith of Celts in Ireland, Scotland and northern England. As part of this plan, our family went to Croagh Patrick, a pyramid-shaped mountain on Ireland's west coast. Tradition says that St. Patrick, credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland, fasted here for 40 days in A.D. 441. Ever since, it has been a pilgrimage place. More than 100,000 people per year come, some even traversing the rocky surface barefoot. My wife, our two teenagers and I decided to attempt this four-hour pilgrim hike.

The trip was unexpectedly hard, and I learned about life's spiritual journey. Such are the benefits of being a pilgrim in a place sanctified by those who have gone before.

The first thing that struck me was that this was tough. For most of the climb, the angle was usually at least 45 degrees and the surface either mud or rocks. My body was not happy with this endeavor.

"Travel" is from "travail," which in French means "work" and—more ominously—in English "suffering." As I prepared for my eight-week journey to Europe, people told me they were envious: I was making the trip of a lifetime, thanks to a generous grant. But traveling and pilgrimage are not only fun, easy or sentimental. They also bring travail. There was a lot of work in planning and preparation.

Upon arrival, I had to learn new ways of driving, struggle with unfamiliar accents and worry about logistical details. But the travail of travel is not just the inconveniences of jet lag, irregular meals or inability to access email. It is also losing familiar surroundings and being dependent on one's own resources in new ways and encountering challenging ideas.

Croagh Patrick symbolized difficult things to which I was called.

Solidarity: The weather was brisk, which was probably a mercy, since it kept us moving. What did not feel so merciful was the frequent, cold rain. Whenever I felt sorry for myself about this self-chosen hardship, I thought of refugees forced to walk hard roads in strange places for days or months with scanty food, fearing for their lives and without the benefits of sturdy footwear and rain gear. Perhaps in a small way this journey could teach me something about solidarity.

It also reminded me that a life of faith is not a rose-petal-strewn pathway. Faithfulness is no guarantee of everything going swimmingly.

But at the same time there were consolations. For the first part of our journey, a nearby stream gurgled cheerfully. I took heart from the lovely sound of water running over rocks. It is important to note the consolations we are offered.

During the first hour, Croagh Patrick's peak was off to our right, usually wreathed in clouds. This was good, since it was too demoralizing to focus there. As long as we trudged, that peak never seemed nearer. It was more encouraging to look behind, see things at the bottom grow smaller and realize that we were

Symbol of difficult things: The statue of St. Patrick seems to guard Croagh Patrick, Ireland's holy mountain near Westport, County Mayo.

making progress. Life is like that, too. When I think of all the growth God may call me to, I can be overwhelmed, even demoralized. But when I see God's faithful guidance in my life so far, then I am encouraged. Faithfulness often means just taking one step at a time. "Taking up one's cross daily" does not mean carrying all of life's crosses at once.

My body ached. The rain and my sweat had drenched my clothes. But when we reached the end of the first slope, things did not get better. Instead we were hit by a relentless, fierce, icy blast of wind that made it hard to keep balanced and that chilled our wet clothes. I could only keep plodding, taking one step after another in spite of pain and soreness.

Things could have been better: more warmth, less icy wind, no rain. But they could have been far worse, too: searing heat or icy storms. It is best to make do with actual conditions rather than dream about how things might be otherwise.

The final ascent was the worst. The slippery slope of scree and mud was often at a 60-degree angle, and the wind did its best to keep us off balance. Sore and exhausted, we had to do the hardest work yet. Every step was precarious. Now we could not see the top at all. Because of steep angles and sharp turns, one could hardly see ahead or behind. Soon our little group spread out and we could not always even see each other.

But I noticed something else. All along the way, we saw other pilgrims spread out on the slopes. I looked enviously at those who passed us on the way down; they had done it and were finished. We usually said little to each other.

Yet now we started conversing with others, even though we were all winded and wearing out. As they came down, we stopped for a few moments, visited and found out a little about each other. They offered warnings about conditions, advice for the climb and encouragement: "It's hard but it's not long now." "It's more than worth the trip."

'A great battle': In the harshness of challenges we all endured, we grew more caring, concerned and outgoing. Philo of Alexandria, a church father, said, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." Here, during the hardest part of our journey, where our resources were most taxed, we were more inclined to help one another. The higher we got and the more severe the conditions, the more compassionate people grew.

But even in our greater friendliness, there was a certain circumspection about not prying into each other's business: We trusted that each had good reasons for being there but did not talk about this. Kindness, respect and circumspection with other pilgrims is always a good policy.

When we got to the top, the clouds lifted and we could see for miles all around. Here were compensations. In the Atlantic, huge islands seemed to float in midair. The water was tinted hues of blue. Mountains extended in several directions, and the land was many shades of green. (This is the Emerald Isle, after all.) We saw a lovely mountain lake across the valley, only visible from this vantage point. Such are the rewards of the hard work of pilgrimage.

The wind was so fierce that I found a place to huddle out of it and regain strength. I found some Dutch people there and was happy to speak my parents' beloved tongue. These people reminded me there were no guarantees on a trip like this. Many predecessors that day had been up here while the peak was crowned by clouds and could see nothing.

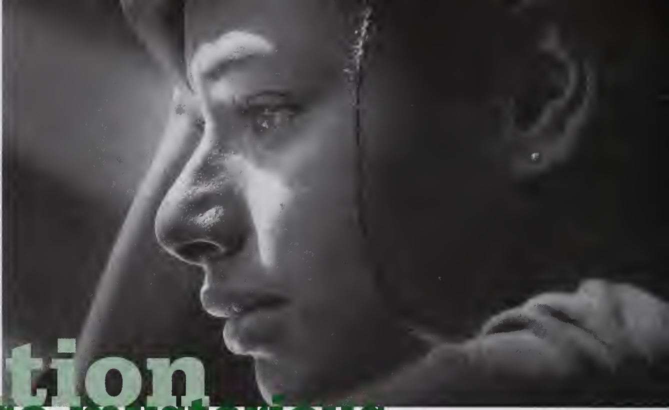
New learnings: The goal is not necessarily the end. Ominous clouds moved in, threatening a storm. We needed to leave, and the journey down was as difficult, if not more dangerous. Now it was easier to slip and fall, as I did several times. It was tempting to be cocky and move too quickly. Besides, our bodies were now so sore that it was hard to move. While I had the easiest time of getting to the peak, I struggled the most on the journey down. The children easily beat us to the bottom. The wind blew harder, and the rain fell more frequently. After any pilgrimage or "mountaintop experience" (pun intended) it is always hard to re-enter one's previous life, introducing new learnings into old circumstances.

Along the way, I paid more attention to others, how and where they stepped. I tried similar things as others or chose to avoid what looked like mistakes. We all need guides and mentors in our spiritual life.

All the way up, I felt discouraged, thinking we were the day's last pilgrims. Why were we so foolish? Had we left matters too late? Was it a mistake? But as we slowly trudged down precarious slopes, we encountered people making their way slowly to the top. In spite of our soreness, pain and struggle, we offered advice and encouragement now, as others had done for us. And we could now say, "It is more than worth it."

Along the way, I paid more attention to others, how and where they stepped. I tried similar things as others or chose to avoid what looked like mistakes. We all need guides and mentors in our spiritual life.

Arthur Paul Boers is pastor of Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.



Meditation not so mysterious

Meditating on Scripture is an important way to connect with God.

by Jan Johnson

Ever get tired of old habits that won't go away? You whine when you should be grateful. You ignore someone when you should care about their needs. Trying to be good doesn't work because such efforts are about us, not about Christ. What works better is connecting with God so that God can "work in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Philippians 2:13 NIV).

One important way to connect with God is meditating on Scripture. Joshua wrote that as you mediate, you become "careful to do everything written in [the book of the Law]" (Joshua 1:8). God moves beyond the door of our inner being through Scripture meditation and works important heart changes.

When activated by the images and truths of Scripture, the imagination supports the penetrating Word of God's ability to become active in our lives.

The psalmists value meditation, mentioning it 16 times, and urge us to reflect on aspects of God's character, such as unfailing love, works and precepts and ways (Psalm 119:15). Beyond that we are given little instruction. That's why I wasn't sure what to do in my early attempts to meditate. I turned to classic writers for help. Just as there are many ways to pray and study Scripture, Christians throughout the ages have found many ways to meditate. Here are two specific approaches to meditation: through our senses and through our imagination.

The five senses: One approach to meditation is to enter into Scripture with all five senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell (a format orginated by Ignatius of Loyola). Scripture itself urges us to use our senses: "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8). "My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:27).

Using the five senses allows you to experience the text in a fresh way. For example, as you enter into the text of Mark 10:17-22, you may take the role of the rich young ruler and see what he saw. In verse 21, Jesus "looked at him and loved him," then immediately challenged him to give up what he apparently loved best: his wealth.

Shut your eyes now. Imagine Jesus' look of love followed by this challenge. I began doing this years ago, and ever since, I have repeatedly had a sense of God looking at me with love and challenging me to give up ingrained habits: self-centered thinking, judgmental attitudes, the need to be right. When I can't give those things up, that picture of Jesus' loving yet challenging gaze resurfaces, and I gradually relinquish them.

As I meditate on a passage, I wonder what the biblical scene looked like. I pretend I am Cecille B. DeMille creating a scene for a biblical epic, such as *The Ten Commandments*. While meditating on the transfiguration of Christ, I've imagined Jesus' radiant face. This passage led me to imitate Steven Spielberg, too—adding the special effects of lightning-bright clothes. Once, as I imagined the scene, I wondered what Jesus was doing when his appearance changed. I peeked at the original script, which says Jesus was praying (Luke 9:29). I prostrated myself on the floor and said to God, "As I pray, change me, too. Make me the person you wish me to be."

Another meditation approach I use is to ask, How would I have behaved if I'd been a disciple sitting in the boat? As Jesus talked to "Legion" in that graveyard by the sea, how would I have responded to the screams of the demonized man and the smell of blood from his cut flesh (Mark 5:5)? What would I have thought of my teacher, who was not intimidated by this naked, crazed man but cared for him? Would I have wanted to run for the hills? Would I have left the boat to watch Jesus in action?

Meditation requires that you pay attention to the details of Scripture, but it's different from Bible study. In Bible study you dissect the text; in Scripture meditation you savor it and enter into it. Meditation helps us absorb scriptural truth on a deeper level. My book *Listening to God* (NavPress, 1998) has more details on this.

Uh ... (gulp) ... meditation? Some Christians are wary of meditation because it's practiced in other world religions. But it's important to remember that Christians do not meditate the same way that practitioners of Eastern religions do. The goals are different. In Eastern religions, participants empty their minds and fill them with nothing. In Christianity we empty our minds of hurried to-do lists, worries about today's appointments and obsession with what others think of us, so that we can focus on the words and images of Scripture.

Some Christians object to using the imagination in meditation. But God urges us to let our minds be renewed (Romans 12:2). Isn't it wiser to give the imagination to God to be retrained than to ignore it? If we don't, our imagination finds entertainment of its own and gets us into trouble. When activated by the images and truths of Scripture, the imagination supports the penetrating Word of God's ability to become active in our lives.

But what if you meditate and nothing happens? Blank moments are times to abide in God and enjoy God's presence (John 15:4, KJV). I do this by pondering Zephaniah 3:17, "The Lord your God ... will take great delight in you ... [and] will rejoice over you with singing." I see God delighting in me and singing over me. As I've imagined this scene, I've remembered how I used to rock my children and sing old hymns until they fell asleep. (A friend of mine sees God delighting and singing over him as a father standing on the sidelines of a soccer game and cheering whether or not he makes a goal.) To simply enjoy God's presence is a delightful thing.

Then, when I least expect it, I notice those old habits fading. I meditate on Jesus' gentleness with the weary, and I am gentle with those around me. This works better than trying hard to be good. This way, God comes into my soul and sits with me, teaching me to abide in him.

Jan Johnson is the author of When the Soul Listens *and* Listening to God, *which includes 30 passages of Scripture and directions for meditating on them.*

tM asks

Mennonite Church USA leaders

Courtesy photo

In this monthly feature, moderator Lee Snyder and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman answer questions about the new denomination. Readers are welcome to submit questions to <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 1-800-790-2498.

If our conference decides not to join Mennonite Church USA, what options are available to our congregation to be part of the new denomination?

According to the new membership guidelines, the congregation would ultimately need to find a new conference. At this point, conferences in the eastern United States seem to have the most questions about joining, so those congregations are the ones most likely to find themselves looking for a new affiliation. At the same time, there is a wider range of conference choices in the east, since conference areas tend to overlap geographically.

We recognize that it may take some time for congregations to find a conference that suits them well. Over the next decade or more, conferences may undergo transformation or realignment as they adapt to the changing needs of congregations. There may even be new conferences formed, so everyone will need to exercise humility, patience and charity as congregations and conference adjust to changes.

Is there going to be one binational Mennonite Church, or are we going to end up with separate churches in Canada and the United States?

It's most accurate to say that we will have separate national churches that carry the same denominational name with the same confessional commitments. At St. Louis 99, delegates from both countries agreed to form separate governing boards. Currently the two governing boards are working together at a plan to fairly divide financial assets.

Although they will be separate churches, we anticipate that the two national bodies will relate closely, operate some joint programs and hold some property in common. The executive committees of the two governing boards will meet together at least once a year to conduct joint business.

Publishing has hard issues to cover

First new church agency faces debt, retiree benefits

The new Mennonite Church has its first program agency as the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) publishing and bookstore operations merged effective Feb. 1. But the new entity, called Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) Inc., is starting with problems, including $3.2 million of debt and a group of disgruntled retirees.

MPH Inc. brings together the GC Faith & Life Press (FLP) and Faith & Life Bookstores (FLB), headquartered in Newton, Kan., and the MC Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa., which included Herald Press and nine Provident Bookstores. Books will be published under the Herald Press name, while curriculum and periodicals *Story Friends, On the Line, With, Purpose, Christian Living* and *Rejoice!* fall under Faith & Life Resources. The two FLB bookstores, located in Berne, Ind., and Newton, will become Provident bookstores.

In addition to being the first agency of the transformed church, MPH Inc. will also be the only one that is binational. It will be accountable to the joint executive committee of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

But the creation of MPH Inc. has not gone smoothly, nor is it complete. On Jan. 27, just five days before the merger was to take effect, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board delayed transferring FLP and FLB assets pending resolution of “potential financial commitments” by the former MPH. That action was later amended by the joint executive committee to delay transferring only nonoperating assets, such as the Berne bookstore building and stock in Mennonite Press, a Newton printing business.

One of those “financial commitments” is restructuring the debt load. The former MPH carries an unsecured debt of $2.6 million, or 16 percent of its gross sales of $15.9 million last year. FLP and FLB are $600,000 in debt, or 29 percent of their total sales of $2.1 million last year. Dennis Good, executive vice president for the new entity, says several avenues may be explored, including assistance from other church agencies to service the debt. Also to be studied will be possible changes, such as discontinuing some publications and selling the MPH printing facility in Scottdale.

At least 23 employees are involved with printing in Scottdale. FLP does not have a printing operation.

“If [the debt] cannot be restructured, it could have the impact of diminishing the amount of publishing we can provide,” Good says.

A second issue is a challenge by a group of MPH retirees protesting a decision to eliminate their supplemental medical insurance benefits. The decision was made last year by the former MPH board to cut costs. Annual payments came to about $75,000 a year and were paid out of current revenues; there was no fund set aside for the payments. Now there is no money to continue paying for those benefits, says Glen Hostetler, chair of both the former MPH board and the current board.

“The board members do care deeply about these retirees,” he says. “In some ways, we’re left with the commitment [made by an earlier board] with no way to pay for it.”

Dialogue continues between the retirees group and the Mennonite Church USA-Mennonite Church Canada joint executive committee.

Both FLP and the former MPH were self-supporting organizations and did not solicit financial contributions or denominational subsidies. “In general, publishing should pay for itself,” says Jim Harder, a member of the Mennonite Church USA executive committee.

But at its first meeting, held Feb. 9-10 near Pittsburgh, the board asked the joint executive committee to re-evaluate that assumption.

No timeline has been set for resolving these issues. “As soon as possible,” Good says.

He formerly was FLP publisher and will become acting publisher of MPH Inc. following current publisher Robert Ramer’s retirement on July 31. Ramer, publisher of the previous MPH since 1987, had earlier announced his intention to retire within the next year but no date had been set.

Other personnel changes include placing the new binational organization’s first staff person in Canada. Byron Rempel-Burkholder, formerly FLP editorial director, will move to Winnipeg in June. Christopher Scott, formerly FLP director of customer services, has been named vice president of marketing for MPH, working out of Newton.—*Rich Preheim*

Two Herald Press books win awards

Two books published by Herald Press—*Getting Home Before Dark* by Peter J. Dyck and *The Hammer Rings Hope* by Lowell Detweiler—have been honored for their “moral and social impact.”

The books received Angel Awards in the print category at last month’s award luncheon of Excellence in Media of Hollywood.

Getting Home Before Dark is a collection of meditations and stories of Christian service. *The Hammer Rings Hope* is a coffee-table book celebrating 50 years of Mennonite Disaster Service.

Other award recipients included *Remember the Titans* as best action film, *Chicken Run* as best animation film and *Cast Away* as best dramatic film.

MCC photo by Denis Mata

Ricardo Torres, a former Mennonite Central Committee worker in Honduras, removes a tattoo from a young man, using the only tattoo-removal machine in the country. The tattoo-removal machine uses infrared light to disintegrate skin cells that hold tattoo ink. Without tattoos, former gang members can more easily find jobs.

Ex-gang members in Honduras leaving their marks thanks to MCC-supported tattoo-removal program

CHAMELECON, Honduras—Twenty-one-year-old Marvin got two tattoos on his upper right arm three years ago. Now, at a clinic in Chamelecon, outside the city of San Pedro Sula, he is getting them burned off. He betrays no pain as the nurse injects him repeatedly with anesthetic beneath the tattoos and his skin swells.

One tattoo is a cross, which Marvin says he got for no particular reason. The other is the name "Julia." Julia is no longer his girlfriend, but that is not why he is removing the tattoos. Instead, Marvin says they make it hard to find work. Nearly all young Hondurans who have tattoos are or have been members of gangs.

A Honduran Mennonite organization called Red de Paz y Justicia (Peace and Justice Network) borrows the tattoo-removal machine, the only one in Honduras, for use in its own ministry to gang members. The network serves youth who are in gangs, have recently dropped out of gangs or are trying to keep from joining them.

Marvin's tattoos do not show any gang affiliation, and he does not volunteer any information about whether he belongs to one. Two other young men at the clinic are not so shy. They remove their T-shirts to display large "MS" logos in block letters across their backs, identifying them as members of Mara Salvatrucha, one of the largest gangs in Honduras.

These tattoos are not visible when the two young men are fully clothed, but they say employers will still find them. Applicants are often asked to disrobe during job interviews so employers can inspect them for tattoos.

Gangs are a severe problem in Honduras. A government agency estimates that 35,000 gang members and "sympathizers" live in and around San Pedro Sula alone. The area has four to five murders a day, most of which are gang-related.

The clinic where tattoos are removed was established by Maryknoll priest David LaBuda. The tattoo removal machine uses infrared light to disintegrate skin cells that hold tattoo ink.

Ricardo Torres, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker who collaborated with Red de Paz y Justicia until his term ended late last year, and Denis Mata, an employee of the network, heard about the tattoo removal program. Torres contacted LaBuda, and the priest offered use of the machine during the clinic's off-hours. Torres and Mata learned how to use the machine, and the network recruited two nurses to bandage and treat the burns. Now that Torres has completed his term, MCC is looking to fill his position.

Red de Paz y Justicia helps reintegrate ex-gang members into society through employment, community service and tattoo removal.

The smallest tattoos need three treatments to be removed completely, while larger tattoos take several more, requiring up to a year. The removal program is so popular that it is booked with appointments for the next five months.

"Without the tattoos, the youth can start over," Mata says.

Edwin Hernandez, 20, an ex-member of the Vatos Locos gang, is a participant in the Red de Paz y Justicia program. He pulls up his shirt to show a five-inch-high "VL" tattoo on his abdomen. He has others on his arms and says that having the tattoos removed is more painful than getting them in the first place. But Hernandez is glad to leave Vatos Locos. "The gang offers nothing," he says, "only bad living and death."—*Eric Timar for MCC News Service*

Central District supports new church

Central District has joined the line waiting to enter Mennonite Church USA.

At their annual assembly March 8-10 in Bluffton, Ohio, Central District delegates unanimously passed a resolution that declared the conference's support for the new denomination if it is approved at this summer's churchwide convention at Nashville, Tenn.

"We look forward with hope and anticipation to our membership in Mennonite Church USA," the resolution says.

The conference's action is only symbolic. Should Nashville delegates approve the new denomination, General Conference Mennonite Church congregations will automatically become members. Current Mennonite Church area conferences will have to act separately to become full members.

Central District becomes the third area conference to declare its intent to join the new denomination. Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest have already taken similar actions.

After two-year MDS assignment, volunteer couple returns to Germany with fear and excitement

Jakob Rempel

Lilli Rempel

> Friends change, and I think we have changed a lot too. I am afraid we will not fit into their normal lives and they will not understand our experience.
>
> *—Lilli Rempel*

AKRON Pa.—Jakob Rempel had taken the mandatory physical and intelligence tests given by the German government and received the highest rating possible. He could have had one of the most sought-after positions in the German military.

But Jakob had a better idea.

"I told them right away that this meeting was nothing, that I was going to apply for alternative service," he says. "As a Mennonite, I was taught not to fight or use weapons. And because of my father's and grandfather's experience with persecution in Russia, I knew that I didn't want anything to do with the military."

In Germany, the alternative to military service is social service. Jakob's idea was to use his obligation to the German government as an opportunity to serve God and the church. But he was not thinking alone. Lilli, his wife of six months and who was not required to serve, decided to join Jakob as a volunteer.

So in 1999, the Rempels came to the United States for a two-year assignment with Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS). "Lilli and I share a compassion for people who are suffering," Jakob says.

Says Lilli: "Some people think that I am doing this because Jakob is doing this. This is something that I wanted to do."

Neither Jakob nor Lilli had any experience in repairing or rebuilding homes that had been damaged by disasters. The Rempels, as newlyweds, were also still getting acquainted with each other.

"In the first couple months of MDS, Lilli and I were not only learning a new language and a new culture, we were learning to work together," Jakob says.

Adds Lilli: "We never actually knew the work side of each other. Jakob is a perfectionist and I need more fun in my work."

As the couple learned to work together, they also learned of the joys of driving big American trucks and the sorrows of living in cramped quarters on an MDS project. The learning continued as the Rempels moved between different MDS project sites, responding to tornadoes in Birmingham, Ala.; Augusta and Wichita, Kan.; and to floods in Burgaw, N.C.

"We have seen people who have lost everything and yet they are satisfied with their life," Jakob says. "On our visits back to Germany we saw people who had so much and yet they were complaining."

The Rempels' term ended earlier this month, and they are returning home with a healthy fear of what it will be like to bring their new experiences back to a familiar but distant environment.

"I am afraid of going back to my friends and my church," Lilli says. "Friends change, and I think we have changed a lot too. I am afraid we will not fit into their normal lives and they will not understand our experience."

Still, these fears do not overshadow Jakob and Lilli's excitement to return home. They are eager to be close to family as they look forward to the birth of a child.—*Ted Houser of MDS News Service*

Annniversary protest

Left to right: Roland Boschmann and Daniel and Diana Krehbiel, students at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., hold photos of Iraqi people during a Feb. 28 campus protest of sanctions against Iraq. Feb. 28 was the 10th anniversary of the cease-fire of the Persian Gulf War. More than 70 people attended the event, which included speakers and ringing an old school bell 166 times, representing the number of children under the age of 5 who die each day because of the sanctions.

June Krehbiel

Most church agencies meet 2000 expenses

GC contributions streak ends, MBM streak continues

NEWTON, Kan.—The 2000 fiscal year saw the General Conference Mennonite Church fall short of its contribution goals for the first time in five years. Meanwhile, Mennonite Board of Missions experienced increased giving for the fifth consecutive year.

The General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) finished the fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31, with 95 percent of its projected budget. This translates to about $4.3 million of a projected $4.5 million.

"The shortfall occurred primarily at the end of the year in giving from both U.S. and Canadian congregations," says GC business manager Ted Stuckey. "We are hoping to see strong giving in this new year to maintain our programs during the last year of binational operations."

Contributions to Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) operating budget rose 7 percent over last year to a record $5.6 million for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31. Individuals contributed $1.6 million, an increase of 21 percent, and congregations gave $4 million, a 3 percent increase. A major portion of the increase in individual giving came from two large gifts.

"We rejoice in God's faithfulness," says MBM president Stanley Green. "The support of individuals and congregations has enabled us to maintain vigorous ministries for the proclamation of the gospel around the world."

For the former Mennonite Church (MC) General Board (now the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board), the fiscal year ending Jan. 31 showed income of $659,874—$49,720 over expenses of $610,154. Area conference contributions were $335,789, or 98.3 percent of a projected $341,428. Last year, area conference contributions were $339,466, or 101 percent of projections.

"I'm delighted that during this time of transition and change, support for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board office from MC area conferences has remained strong," says Ron Byler, associate executive director-designate for Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries also met its budget for the fiscal year that ended Jan. 31, 2001, receiving $473,307 compared with expenses of $448,463. But both figures were down from last year, when MBCM received $476,459 in contributions and spent $476,974.

Contributions to the Mennonite Mutual Aid Sharing Fund programs were down slightly this year, from $178,244 in 1999 to $159,153 in 2000. The number of contributors to these funds, which are raised by spring and fall solicitation letters that MMA sends to all its members, was also down slightly. But Vyron Schmidt, vice president for fraternal benefits, says, "More people are including the MMA Sharing Fund programs in their wills, and we have received some significant estate distributions lately."

Sharing Fund provides grants to congregations for benevolent causes. MMA gave $2.34 million in grants to churches in 2000, up slightly from $2.26 million last year. Congregations, which have to provide matching funds, increased their matches from $4.36 million in 1999 to $4.69 million in 2000.

The Mennonite Board of Education fiscal year ends June 30. For 1999-2000, contributions totaled $85,522, a slight increase over $85,271 in 1998-99.

Indiana church wins MCC award

Kern Road Mennonite Church's witness against the death penalty has earned the South Bend, Ind., congregation the first congregational advocacy award from the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office.

The award recognizes congregations that include public policy advocacy as part of their faith witness.

In 1999, Kern Road members provided a prayerful courtroom presence during the capital trial of an African-American youth. The congregation has also organized a number of prayer vigils and petitions against the death penalty. Kern Road provides meeting space and has been active with a local anti-death penalty group.

Kern Road will receive a painting on a peace and justice theme by Pam Seretny, art teacher at Philadelphia Mennonite High School. The painting was commissioned by the Washington Office. *—MCC News Service*

Indonesian synod has first assembly after reconciliation

PATI, Indonesia—The Indonesian Mennonite synod GITJ gathered for a general assembly March 5, the first such gathering since 1990. Internal disputes had split the synod until the rival factions reconciled in November 2000.

Major items of business were completing the selection of personnel for GITJ commissions and boards and naming representatives to interchurch and international bodies. Also approved were a budget and program plans for the next two years.

One issue needing to be addressed is reestablishing ties to various foundations that had cut their ties to the GITJ. *—MWC News Service*

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Professor examines college faculty activism

GOSHEN, Ind.—Faculty members at the U.S. Mennonite colleges perceive their peers as having lost interest in social activism. In reality, says a researcher, they have increased the breadth of their involvement but limited the depth.

Keith Graber Miller, professor of Bible, religion and philosophy at Goshen (Ind.) College, studied Mennonite college activism for the 2001 C. Henry Smith Peace Lecture. He presented his lecture March 14 at Goshen. He also spoke at Bluffton (Ohio) College Feb. 27. The lecture gives a historical perspective on past faculty activity at Goshen, Bluffton, Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. Miller also examines current campus activism.

"It is neither possible nor desirable to return to the '60s," he says. "But it is equally clear that as faculty and administrators at Mennonite colleges, we could do more in living for Christ and living for others."

Annual lectures explore evangelicalism

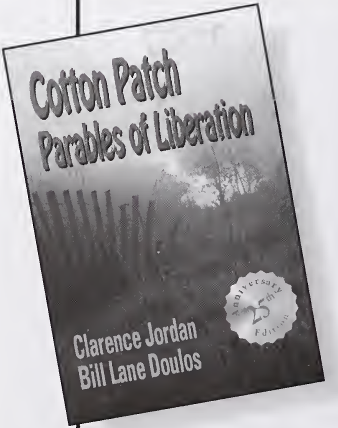
ELKHART, Ind.—Amid confusion about what evangelicalism means, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart focused on that idea for its annual Theological Lectureship. Donald Dayton, professor of historical theology at Drew University, Madison, N.J., spoke on "Rethinking Evangelicalism" Feb. 21-22.

Dayton's lectures covered fundamental and conflicting usages of the word "evangelicalism," conservative and liberal elements, and historical aspects of evangelicalism.

"Donald Dayton's lectures were both fascinating and enlightening as we consider our evangelical-Anabaptist identity here at AMBS," says dean Loren L. Johns. "If evangelicalism refers to a kind of sophisticated neo-fundamentalism or a 'God-and-country' form of patriotism, we do well to critique it. But if evangelicalism refers to an open confidence in the life-changing power of the good news of Jesus Christ for the world today, then bring it on."

this date in Mennonite history

March 20, 1527—Anabaptist leader Michael Sattler burned at the stake in Rottenburg, Germany



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Births

Bontrager, Chloe Elizabeth, Dec. 29, 2000, to Janet and Keith Bontrager, Goshen, Ind.

Dicob, Jacob Scott, Feb. 8, to Rich and Suzanne Dicob, Beaver Falls, N.Y.

Gehman, Cole Devon, Feb. 23, to Bruce and Jacquelin Gehman, Harrisburg, Pa.

Kennedy, Alexandra Hope, Feb. 16, to Ken and Kim (Hatter) Kennedy, Harrisonburg, Va.

Landers, Julian Bergey, Jan. 26, to Susan Bergey and Robyn Landers, St. Agatha, Ont.

Lyndaker, Chase Edward, Feb. 23, to Larry and Sandra (Steckly) Lyndaker, Castorland, N.Y.

Mast, Cory Ray, Feb. 16, to Delvin and Stephanie (Eldridge) Mast, Goshen, Ind.

McGloughlin, Willem Wesley Yoder, Feb. 22, to Amy (Yoder) and Charlie McGloughlin, Philadelphia.

Nelson, Lucas Leatherman, Feb. 20, to Judith Leatherman and Mark Nelson, Philadelphia.

Poust, Katelyn Renee, March 1, to Jessica (Sellars) and Richard Poust, Souderton, Pa.

Renninger, Dylan Kade, Feb. 25, to Jason and Jessica (Hartzler) Renninger, Belleville, Pa.

Richer, Hannah Elizabeth, Jan. 12, to Carla (Nunemaker) and Chad Richer, Goshen, Ind.

Showalter, Blayze Remington, Feb. 26, to Angela (McFarland) and Matthew Showalter, Hutchinson, Kan.

Wenger, Taylor Eberly, Feb. 11, to Aimee and Lowell Wenger, Northeast, Md.

Wert, Cerys Anwen, Feb. 15, to Alan and Carol (Bollinger) Wert, Ynysybwl, Wales.

Yoder, Gabriel Lee, Feb. 15, to Rickardo and Shali (Buxton) Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Bibbs/Davis: Charlotte Bibbs, Chambersburg, Pa., and Michael Davis, Chambersburg, Feb. 24 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Gauss/Tingley: Jenifer Gauss, Stockbridge, Mich., and Matthew Tingley, Stryker, Ohio, March 3 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Keener/Ramos: Gloria Keener, Chambersburg, Pa., and Antonio Ramos, Harrisonburg, Va., Feb. 10 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Deaths

Alderfer, Robert, 70, Telford, Pa., died Feb. 5 of a brain hemorrhage. Spouse: Dolores Alderfer. Parents: Isaac and Elizabeth Alderfer (deceased). Other survivors: children Dale, Jolene Weaver, Denise Kiser; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Dirks, Harvey, 98, Great Bend, Kan., died Feb. 16 of pneumonia. Spouse: Ella Schultz Dirks. Parents: Jacob and Caroline Ratzlaff Dirks (deceased). Other survivors: children Homer, Beverly Prescott; seven grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19.

Foth, Esther Krehbiel, 88, North Newton, Kan., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Walter Foth (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Mary Goering Krehbiel (deceased). Survivors: children Marilyn Schmidt, Lois Corbin; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 25 at North Newton.

Gingerich, Oscar, 78, Kokomo, Ind., died Feb. 25. Spouse: (1st) Marjorie Cox Gingerich (deceased); (2nd) Mildred Cox Sellers Gingerich. Parents: Joseph and Malinda Stutzman Gingerich (deceased). Other survivors: children Max, Norman, Clifford, Linda Tremblay; stepson Jerry Sellers; three grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo.

Hochstetler, Goldy Viola Stoll, 83, Wolford, N.D., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Melvin Hochstetler (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Annie Gingerich Stoll (deceased). Survivors: children Melvin Jr., Treva Graber, Trella Kauffman, Sherry Kauffman, Jay, Jonathon, David; 29 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Lakeview Mennonite Church, Wolford.

Isaac, Erma, 59, La Junta, Colo., died Feb. 23 of cancer. Parents: Pete Isaac and Agatha Classen (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 27 at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

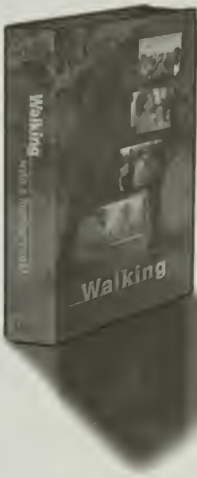
Kauffman, Sarah Oswald, 88, Milford, Neb., died Feb. 16. Spouse: Emery Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Birky Oswald (deceased). Survivors: stepsons Cliff, Joe, Paul, Dan, Jim. Funeral: Feb. 20 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley, Neb.

Kennel, Walter, 85, Morton, Ill., died Feb. 21. Spouse: Fern Kennel. Parents: John and Antonia Guengerich Kennel (deceased). Other survivors: children Clinton, Joan Paul; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

King, Martha, 83, Westover, Md., died Dec. 26, 2000, of injuries from an auto accident. Spouse: Amos King. Parents: Joseph and Minnie Sieber Wert (deceased). Other survivors: children Elmer, Walter, Ruby Dorsey, Harry, Miriam Dagen, Daniel, Rosa, Bill, A. J.; 25 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 30 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover.

Litwiller, Martha Nolder, 95, Delavan, Ill., died Feb. 24. Spouse: Roy Litwiller (deceased). Parents: Charles and Iva Bever Nolder (deceased). Survivors: children Carol, Marzella, Joan Bright, Jean Stark; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Schrag, Erwin, 87, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Frances Musselman (deceased). Parents: Tobias and Frances Graber Schrag (deceased). Survivors: children Sam, Don, Janette Zercher; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.



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classifieds

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- **Eastern Pennsylvania church planters conference:** May 19-20 at Morgantown Community Church, Box 468, Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-5153.

- **Harmonies Workshop**, Leola, Pa., seeks ***manager*** for events, sales and administration. Approx. 10 hrs/wk to start. Flexibility and competitive pay/benefits.

  Call Glenn Lehman, 717-656-2749 or email <office@harmonies.org>.

- **New Covenant Christian School** is seeking certified teachers for the following openings: ***middle school/high school math*** and ***art instruction*** (two days per week).

  For both openings, please send resumes to Neal J. Eckert, New Covenant Christian School, 452 Ebenezer Road, Lebanon, PA 17046; 717-274-2423.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center**, Mount Pleasant, Pa., seeks a ***program director***. Full-time position to begin July 15, 2001. Unique ministry opportunity for creative, visionary person with business, programming, marketing and theology background. Responsible to executive director. Salary with benefits including health insurance.

  Contact Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, 1-800-839-1021 to request application, or visit our web site at <www.laurelville.org> to print application, or email <info@laurelville.org>.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** has one- or two-week service opportunities available assisting with the summer camping program, July 15-Aug. 17. ***Counselors, recreation, music and craft directors*** are needed. Families of a spouse assisting with the programs receive free room and board, and children receive a complimentary week of camp. Three-month summer positions also available in ***counseling, lifeguarding and kitchen***.

  Call Jon Welty Peachey at 1-800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056; email <jon@laurelville.org>.

- **Casa del Sol**, an independent-living retirement community, La Junta, Colo., seeks ***manager***, available beginning mid-July 2001. Ideal candidate will be highly motivated, well organized, trustworthy with a caring spirit toward older adults, good administrative and communication skills and a working knowledge of Windows 98. Oversees daily operation and activities and includes marketing.

  For inquiries/application: Casa del Sol, 1002 Casa del Sol Drive, La Junta, CO 81050; 719-384-0342; email <info@casadelsollj.org>. Applications should be received prior to May 1.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***elementary 4th-grade teacher, middle school science/math, middle school Bible/social studies***. Bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Service Adventure**, a 10-1/2 month service-learning program for young adults ages 17-20, needs ***experienced leaders***. Skills desired: mentoring, spiritual nurturing, conflict resolution. Benefits: pre-assignment training, room/board, vacation, strong support system. Two-year term. Minimum age: 24. Accepting applications for fall 2001 in Albuquerque, N.M.; Champaign, Ill.; Johnstown, Pa.; Lethbridge, Alta.; Raleigh, N.C.

  Contact Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email <ServiceAdventure@MBM.org>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a nonprofit, fair-trade organization, is currently recruiting for a ***marketing and development trainer*** located at our headquarters in Akron, Pa. The successful candidate must have experience and/or training in marketing or retail environment as well as in strategic planning and project management. Be an integral and exciting part of the fair-trade industry by joining our team of professional staff that is making a difference.

  For more information, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***director of Division of Adult and External Studies***. Administrative responsibility for on- and off-campus programs that includes directing a staff, shaping curricula, selecting and developing faculty, maintaining program schedules and logistics and assuring quality customer service. An advanced degree related to adult studies, administration or an academic field is strongly preferred. Refer to position announcement at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment" for more details.

  Please send a letter of application and resume listing three references to Paul Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <Dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

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- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
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by Gordon Houser

Pornography is increasingly accessible to people, and much as we may oppose it, we often ignore its influence among us. We tend to think it is a problem for people out there, not for those of us who are members of the church.

During Pastors Week, Jan. 30-Feb. 2, at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., I spoke with a pastor who told me a story related to this hidden problem.

A pastor he knows accompanied a group of men from his congregation to a Promise Keepers rally. There a call went out at some point for men who had problems with pornography to come forward, confess their sin and give it up. To the pastor's surprise, five men from his congregation went forward. He had no clue about their problem, he said.

People who may not take the chance of being caught buying *Playboy*, *Playgirl* or *Hustler* at the local convenience store can easily visit pornographic web sites in the privacy of their homes. While some may visit these simply out of curiosity, some become addicted to the practice.

The March 5 issue of *Christianity Today* includes a story of a youth pastor who describes his journey of addiction to pornography. He eventually confessed his problem and got professional help.

In an exclusive survey of its readership last August, *Christianity Today* learned that more than a third of the respondents—33 percent of clergy and 36 percent of laity—have visited a sexually explicit web site. Of these, 18 percent of the clergy said they visit such sites between a couple of times a month and more than once a week.

According to Jennifer Schneider, an addiction medicine specialist and author of the forthcoming book *Cybersex Exposed: Recognizing the Obsession* (Hazelden, 2001), repeated Internet pornography use becomes an addiction when the user becomes obsessed with the behavior, spending large amounts of time online, even in the face of personal and professional consequences.

One problem with Christians, especially with pastors, is the reluctance to talk about such behavior and seek help. Of those clergy who have visited sexually explicit web sites, according to the survey, only 28 percent said that their spouses know. Of these clergy who use Internet porn, 30 percent do not talk to anyone about their behavior.

Is this one more part of our culture affecting us while we remain silent about it? When was the last time you heard a sermon about pornography or talked about it in your Sunday school class?

On the one hand, people's use of pornography may be kept a secret because of the knee-jerk reaction of many Christians even to the word. On the other hand, some of us may turn a blind eye to it and ignore its influence.

It is difficult to escape. Soft porn shows up on television and adorns the covers of magazines near the check-out line at the grocery store. People who have Internet access at home tell me ads for porn show up frequently on their screen. One friend told me that when he tried to unsubscribe, he ended up getting twice as many ads.

It is present everywhere because pornography is one of the most profitable ventures on the Internet. Online porn revenues increased from $52 million in 1996 to more than $2 billion by 1999, according to *Obscene Profits: The Entrepreneurs of Pornography in the Cyber Age* (Routledge, 2000).

Mennonite Mutual Aid is one group trying to oppose this trend. MMA has led a coalition of Christian investors in AT&T stock to hold that company accountable for peddling porn to its cable customers. (See *The Mennonite*, Dec. 26, 2000, page 10.)

We all need to talk about issues such as pornography to help reduce its influence. It will not just go away on its own.

The Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg is proposing the creation of a Mennonite World Family Quilt. This quilt is to be a reflection of Mennonite communities around the world.

In North American traditions, quilts are generally made in specific ways following established patterns. The gallery wants to use the idea of a quilt—many pieces of cloth sewn together—but beyond that allow total freedom of expression and materials. It is looking for people within Mennonite churches to submit pieces of cloth (quilt blocks) that are 12" x 12" with designs that reflect each quilter's community, church or family. The submitted blocks should arrive in Winnipeg no later than March.

Whatever quilt blocks are received at the gallery will be sewn together to make one giant quilt reflecting the Mennonite family around the world. This quilt will then go on display in the gallery and be available to tour to other places interested in exhibiting it.

For more information contact Ray Dirks at 204-667-9340 or <rdirks99@home.com >.

books

***A Journey Into Christian Art* by Helen de Borchgrave (Fortress Press, 2000, $35) is a beautifully illustrated book that tells the story of 2,000 years of Christian art—from early wall-paintings to contemporary works by living artists. The author writes that while Christian art aspires to "make visible the invisible, ... this richness of life is in danger of death in our contemporary culture of facts and figures, where time is money, speed drives us, and noise blocks out the inner voice." This book will help us get in touch with that richness.**

films

***You Can Count on Me* (R) tells the story of an older sister and younger brother who lose their parents when young. Later, as adults, the brother, now a drifter, visits the sister, now a single mom with an 8-year-old son, and they revert to old patterns. But they arrive at an understanding that is moving. Religion comes off looking a bit insipid, but at least the film raises questions of God and of meaning.**

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Everett J. Thomas

Cards, notes and insights from readers

I have been working at the business of editing this magazine for 100 days now. The milestone coincides with *The Mennonite*'s annual donation mailing, and for the past month we have been showered with wonderful notes and comments from hundreds of readers. Of course, the contribution checks with those notes lend weight to the affirmations and other sentiments.

These 100 days since last Nov. 1 (for those counting, I did take off work on holidays and most weekends) have been filled with surprises, some regrets and new insights.

Surprises: The biggest surprise for me has been our readers and their deep commitment to this magazine. So far, more than 600 responded to my letter requesting contributions to the magazine's budget. Their donations have totaled almost $26,000; most were contributions of $25 or $50. Many took advantage of the space on the return card with the heading, "What I would like to tell the editors."

I lost count of how many simply wrote, "Keep up the good work" or "Thanks for a great magazine" or "We are praying for you." As I handled each card and thought of the blessings sent our way, I got in touch with this great cloud of witnesses across the church who silently lend their support.

How could we not get *The Mennonite?* It is 90 percent of our bathroom reading material! —*a loyal reader*

Of course, some respondents also took the occasion to suggest changes for improving the magazine. The most common related to letters to the editor and frequency of publication. According to these supporters, the letters should be moved to a less prominent location in the magazine and we should publish every other week rather than weekly.

Regrets: A second surprise, which quickly became a regret, relates to the effect that seemingly small decisions can have on certain readers. For example, when we ran a Church School Day article with the title, "Memo to the Administration," I learned how painful such a title was to some administrators in our church schools. In fact, one friend who is an administrator at a Mennonite college pointedly asked if he could write another article entitled, "Memo *From* the Administration." I did not anticipate how personally that title would be taken by some deeply committed and caring leaders in our schools.

The greater regret, however, relates to three years of declining circulation. In various settings, some folks offered their own explanations for this decline. According to these voices, the magazine is too expensive. It comes too often. It is not pastoral enough. It needs greater spiritual depth. It is too controversial. It needs a more attractive design.

Insights: However, some comments helped clarify another reason for circulation decline. This magazine was created out of the old *The Mennonite* and *Gospel Herald.* It was to be the face of the emerging Mennonite Church USA. But there are members in both General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations who are not yet convinced that this merger process is God's will. In fact, we hear from some who are convinced that it is not. Consequently, the only tangible way to vote their dissent is by canceling their subscriptions to *The Mennonite.*

Nevertheless, we press on to fulfill the task assigned to us. We plan to redesign the magazine by January 2002. We hope to print some pages in full color. We may publish every other week with twice as many pages in each issue. We do intend to set a pastoral tone.

This all means that those of us called to produce this magazine are also in a time of transformation. But along the way, some moments are sublime. When we asked one reader why he discontinued his subscription, he apologized and explained that it was an oversight. After resubscribing, he wrote: "How could we not get *The Mennonite?* It is 90 percent of our bathroom reading material!"

On that note I start the next 100 days. To all who offered counsel, criticism and caring, I offer my thanks. We hope that this magazine will continue to help you glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in your world.

After all, that is our mission.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

March 27, 2001

AMBS
LIBRARY

do not worry about anything

page 4

6 Impasse: What next?
10 MCC helps overlooked earthquake victims
12 Orphans find mercy in Ukrainian church
20 The Lenten journey home

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

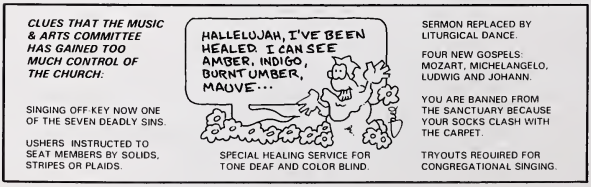
Covering women

I was quite excited when I saw the cover of the March 13 issue with the theme of women in the pulpit. My excitement, though, quickly evaporated as I scanned the articles and realized that there were two articles and an editorial about this subject, all written by well-intentioned men. There are many wise women in my family with varying opinions on women in ministry and headcoverings. I respect each of them because I believe they are following what God is asking of them. I think it is time we let women say that and not always men. I would have enjoyed hearing the thoughts, reflections and arguments of female Mennonite pastors and members. I know we have a lot to say as well. My grandmothers and their headcoverings taught me that.—*Jodi Hochstedler, Pittsburgh*

I am troubled by the use of the Jason J. Yoder article, "The Head of the Woman Is Man," in the March 13 issue. Yoder is identified as a participant in Sangro de Christo Mennonite Church in Westcliffe, Colo., but we are not told that this is an independent Mennonite group. (I called the conference minister for Rocky Mountain Conference to get this information after not finding the congregation listed in the *Mennonite Directory*). Readers are left to assume that Yoder is part of the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

I am well aware of the different viewpoints present in Mennonite Church USA on both women in ministry and the covering (although the covering has never been an issue in the General Conference Mennonite Church). But in our denominational magazine, let us hear those perspectives from members of our own denomination, or at least clarify when the voice is one from outside. That will assist us in continuing to understand one another better in our transforming church.—*Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Elkhart, Ind.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


CLUES THAT THE MUSIC & ARTS COMMITTEE HAS GAINED TOO MUCH CONTROL OF THE CHURCH:
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USHERS INSTRUCTED TO SEAT MEMBERS BY SOLIDS, STRIPES OR PLAIDS.
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YOU ARE BANNED FROM THE SANCTUARY BECAUSE YOUR SOCKS CLASH WITH THE CARPET.
TRYOUTS REQUIRED FOR CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

Samaria and Holmes County

Thanks for the editorial regarding racism ("Safe at First," Feb. 27). I applaud the Mennonite church for leading out against this tool of the devil. In the 1960s, I walked the picket lines in Wichita, Kan., and Hattiesburg, Miss. In Mississippi I went from home to home helping people register to vote. We lived in the black communities of Wichita and Portland, Ore. In Denver we worked with people of color. In these situations we saw and felt the effects of racism. Today's racism is not as open as it was then, making it more difficult to identify. Thanks to Mennonite Central Committee workers Regina Shands Stoltzfus and Tobin Miller Shearer via the Damascus Road project for leading us to a better understanding of the issues and giving us tools to help us rid ourselves, our churches and institutions of this crime against our brothers and sisters. Also, thanks to our churches and institutions for being open to the Damascus Road project.

As a white, blue-eyed, brown-haired (now gray) man from Lancaster County, Pa., I could walk in and out of the effects of racism. This is/was not an option for people of color.

When Jesus said he must go through Samaria, it was not to save travel time but to reinforce the truth that God does not favor any new race of people. May we humble ourselves as new Damascus Road coordinators Brenda Zook Friesen and Conrad Moore help us reinforce God's truth as we walk together through our Samaria today. We have an opportunity to identify with Jesus and his truth as we stand with people of color. I pray a blessing on Brenda and Conrad as they take up the task of leading us to eliminate racism.—*Lyn Hershey, Payette, Idaho*

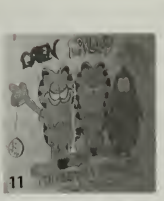
Maybe a modern-day true parable might be found to be a beacon of light for the Mennonites and Amish—and that parable appears in a national secular magazine, *Sports Illustrated*, which has a story about Amish and Mennonites and one outsider black man, Perry Reese Jr.

I taught a Sunday school class of 50 seniors in Phoenix on March 11. The lesson was on the fruits of the Spirit. We were studying John Drescher's book *Doing What Comes Spiritually.* The subject for the morning was the fruit of love. The text was from the March 5 issue of *Sports Illustrated.* The whole Sunday school time was spent reading "Higher Education," the story of how an outsider basketball coach, the only African-American in

theMennonite

Vol. 4, No. 12, March 27, 2001

features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readers say

eastern Holmes County, Ohio, broke down the walls of prejudice concerning race and religion and became a model for leadership, motivation, teamwork, building community, sacrifice and love.

Can one person make a dent in the daunting problems of our society? Holmes County knows the answer to that question and will never be the same, having experienced the challenge and model presented by Perry Reese Jr., who died recently from a brain tumor. I doubt the Mennonite church will ever be the same either, once this parable makes its rounds in Mennonite society.—*Evan Oswald, Glendale, Ariz.*

Cultural wilderness

It is encouraging to see in *The Mennonite* the serious interpretative work of Willard Swartley relating the new covenant in Jesus Christ to the continuities of the one covenanting God ("The Old Testament in Relation to the New," Feb. 13). Give us more of such meat for times of "wilderness," about which James Lapp writes in the same issue ("Waiting in the Wilderness"). It is most nourishing at this time when our Lord's prophetic word about "God's plan from the beginning" (Mark 10:6, NLT) is not accepted by many in this culture to be an authoritative word of messianic restoration. In the West today, the important Anabaptist thrust on the newness in Christ may too easily become identified with Western culture's own sense of progress. Then that becomes the canon for critiquing the unique continuities of the one God of covenant. Swartley's work is an important corrective for Western Anabaptists in the cultural wilderness where the Creator God of covenant and its continuities are bracketed out.—*David A. Shank, Sturgis, Mich.*

Cover photo
by Luke Golobitsh

What I gave up for Lent

Giving up worry for Lent has led to four new hobbies.

by Elaine Maust

We had just returned from eating at Barnhill's, a local more-than-you-can-eat buffet, on a Tuesday night. Having eaten more than I needed and topping that off with coconut pie, I was experiencing a personal Fat Tuesday.

Later that evening, I prayed, "Lord, tomorrow is Ash Wednesday. Would you like me to give up something for Lent?" I don't practice this discipline every year, but I had felt the Lord nudging me. One Lent I did without desserts. During another I had nothing to drink but water and orange juice at breakfast. I found these tiny sacrifices to be disciplines of grace.

I felt God say, "Worry."

Worry is such a treasured vice for me. How could I possibly do without it? It seemed a shame to give up something I do so well. I can start with an innocent thought, and in minutes I will have a full scenario of disaster, complete with all the dreadful details. I have a right to worry. After all, I am a pastor, a wife and a mother. Think of all the people in my life worth worrying over.

How might my prayers change if I prayed without worrying? Though the Bible teaches persistence in prayer, my growth edge is simply to tell God what I want and trust him for the best.

The truth is, worry is a secret pleasure for me. More treasured than a bubble bath, more portable than my garden, more satisfying than a Diet Coke. How could I go without it for the entire six weeks of Lent?

Yet the thought of it left me light, happy, free. This joy and lightness must be from God, I thought. I tested the idea with Duane, my ministry partner and husband. "Guess what I'm giving up for Lent," I said with a big smile.

He looked uncertain.

"Worry," I declared.

He looked as if I had just declared I was going to hold my breath for the next six weeks.

The next day I thought a lot about worry. I had to have something to do with my overactive imagination if I wasn't going to use it for jumping to conclusions. I wondered if all this worrying was an insult to God's care. Worrying assumes God either doesn't know what he's doing or is incapable of doing what needs to be done.

And what about my frantic prayers? Jesus says, "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"(Matthew 7:9-11).

Like a parent: I wondered if God just needed a break from me for a few weeks, like a parent who longs for a break from a fretting, whining child. "And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your father knows what you need before you ask him"(Matthew 6:7-8).

How might my prayers change if I prayed without worrying? Though the Bible teaches persistence in prayer, my growth edge is simply to tell God what I want and trust him for the best.

My worry never did me or anybody else any good. My brother-in-law Brent reminded me the other day, "If you can't do anything about it, don't worry about it." Jesus said, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" (Matthew 6:27). I need to ask if this is anything I can do something about. If it is, then I need to get to work. If it isn't, I need to let it go.

A person given to worry is likely a person who plans ahead, one who understands consequences, shows responsibility and is concerned for others. But forethought, care and responsibility get twisted with worry.

As I walked up the steps to the Ash Wednesday Mass at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, I wanted to save the care but pitch the worry. I knelt to pray. My first day had been tough. Giving up caffeine was much easier. At least I knew whether or not I had done it. I was sacrificing something as much a part of me as my graying hair. I prayed for grace.

Later I stood as the ashes were pressed onto my forehead. "Turn away from sin," the young woman said, looking me in the eye, "and be faithful to the gospel." The words echoed as I walked back to my pew.

As I knelt again the words of the Gospel came to me: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life. … Do not worry. … Do

Luke Golobitsh

not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 7:25-34). "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life" (Luke 12:22a). "Do not worry about anything" (Philippians 4:6a). This giving up worry for Lent wasn't just a gimmick; it was obeying a command of Jesus that I was breaking every day. God had asked me to give up my sin. Could I make such a sacrifice for six weeks for a dear friend?

That is what Lent is about: repenting, realizing that despite all our self-importance we are only ashes. We are to use this season to open our hearts to God and let him tell us the truth. Then we are to turn around. It is a time of sacrifice but also a time of grace. It is an amazing grace that God would trouble with us at all. When he has earthquakes to deal with, God comes to me on a Tuesday night and nudges me toward a life of greater freedom and wholeness and blessing. And on top of that God gives the grace to do it. "For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure"(Philippians 2:13).

With my free time I'm taking up these new hobbies for Lent:

1. Living in the frame. God has shown me that I do best when I view my life as a photo album and not a video, taking one frame at a time. I tend to reflect on the past painfully and the future fearfully. I am most content when I live in a snapshot. Some folks need to learn to see the big picture. Others, like me, see the big picture too well, especially when it comes to exaggerated views of future doom. We need to learn to experience and enjoy the small picture. When I find myself struggling with what happened or what might happen, I stop and look at the moment. Snap a frame. Then I realize I am driving a car I like, having a quiet moment alone and heading into the church to a job I love. I remind myself over and over during the day to catch the frame and live in it.

2. Being thankful. "This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). I snap the picture and give thanks. When someone comes to mind I am tempted to worry for, I give thanks for all that person is and will be. I imagine a future of hope and give thanks that God is working in that direction. Instead of feeling sorry for myself, I make a mental list of things in that moment, the simple things for which I'm thankful: hot water, a dry bed, a good laugh, a child's hug. I try to say thank you as often as I say please. "Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

3. Trusting. I want to believe that just because something hasn't happened yet doesn't mean it never will. I will tell God, "That's OK. Take your time." "Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" (Psalm 27:14).

4. Letting it flow. I need to allow life to come to me with quiet acceptance. I imagine myself sitting beside the creek down at the back of our farm, hugging my knees, watching the creek flow by, not concerned about what passes by, not harassed by what may float up next but accepting each moment as a moment of grace. When I feel anxiety creeping up, I remind myself that I gave that up for Lent. The bid will get done for the customer at the shop by Friday. The sermon will be ready on Sunday. Yes, I probably did turn the oven on. I will sit by the bank and let life flow.

Instead of feeling sorry for myself, I make a mental list of things in that moment, the simple things for which I'm thankful: hot water, a dry bed, a good laugh, a child's hug.

In the past I've looked forward to Easter not only for celebrating the joy of Christ's resurrection or seeing the flowers on the cross in front of Calvary Baptist Church but because Easter means the first taste in a long time of chocolate or Diet Coke. I wonder what this Easter will be like for me after a Lent without worry. A resurrection miracle this year will be that I do not take worry up again.

In the meantime it's good to know I don't have to be perfect. One of the songs we sang at St. Patrick's on Ash Wednesday night said, "We offer you our failures, we offer you attempts." That's one of those wonderful things about God. We can offer our failures, our attempts, our sacrifices, our disciplines. He accepts anything we offer as a gift. Even giving up worry for Lent.

Elaine Maust is a businesswoman and co-pastor of Jubilee Mennonite Church, Meridian, Miss.

Impasse What next?

The book of Job teaches us about handling disputes.

by Victor Stoltzfus

Impasse is a hopeless deadlock among people who are trying to persuade each other. As Webster puts it, impasse is "a way that has no outlet." Secular society recognizes that disputes between labor and management may reach a point where further negotiation is fruitless. The next step may be an outside mediator, arbitration or a strike. Impasse between nations can end with cold or hot war. I recently learned of a religious organization reporting "misunderstandings … which led to an impasse." They wrote, "To avoid lengthy court proceedings, we have agreed to an out-of-court settlement."

The book of Job also tells a story of impasse after lengthy interchanges between Job and his friends. Job suffers the loss of his wealth, his health and his 10 children. Job claims innocence and accuses God of injustice. His friends begin with a silent ministry of presence for seven days. After that they try to persuade Job that he is suffering because either he or his children have sinned.

Friend Eliphaz breaks the silence with a polite, "If one ventures a word with you, will you be offended?" (Job 4:2a). But after Job and his friends speak to each other in several rounds of monologues, they become more than grouchy. Zophar says, "My mind is seething with anger. … I have heard enough of your insults, you answer our wisdom with lies" (*The Book of Job*, translated by Stephen Mitchell). Eliphaz says, "Your guilt must be great indeed, your crimes must be inconceivable" (Mitchell). Job realizes he is not getting across to his friends. He says, "Listen now … when I finish, then you can laugh" (Mitchell).

Job teaches us that we can reach a point where further debate is worse than useless. We recognize a flash point when the discussion is no longer about ideas but about the tactics of exclusion or inclusion.

In Job 31:40b, the poet says, "the words of Job are ended," and in 32:1, "So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes." They were at an impasse. An angry young man named Elihu picks up the debate but his monologue elicited no response from either Job, the three friends or God.

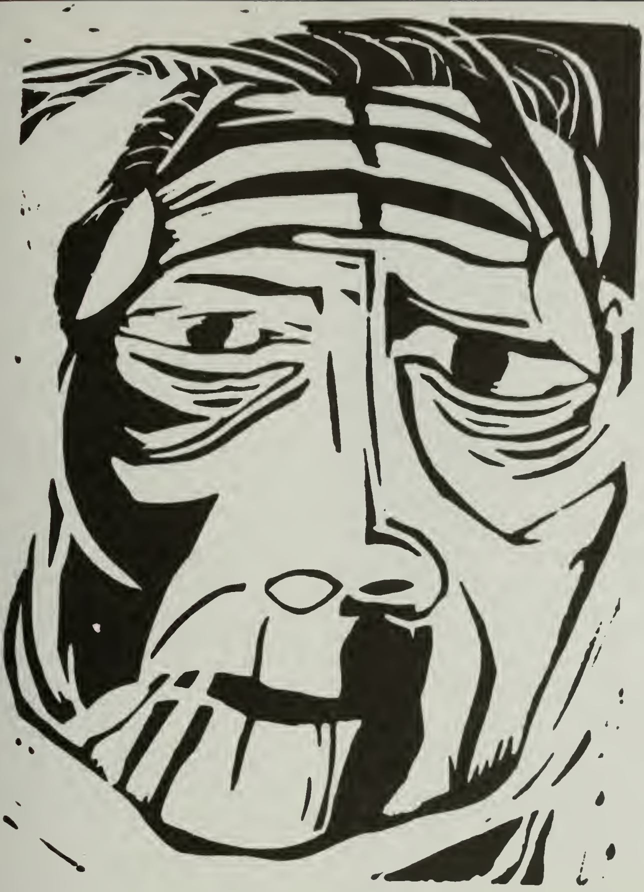
Religious violence: Job teaches us that we can reach a point where further debate is worse than useless. We recognize a flash point when the discussion is no longer about ideas but about the tactics of exclusion or inclusion. Continuing to grind away can make things worse with increasing bitterness. Division is a risk after impasse. After the impasse of fruitless debate came the Amish and Mennonite division of the 17th century. Presbyterians divided over slavery after impasse in the 19th century. Religious violence is the extreme aftermath of impasse, evident at times among the tribes of Israel and today among the "tribes" of Ireland and Africa.

In the book of Job, the impasse is broken by a majestic God visibly appearing and speaking to Job. This is rare in the Bible, but it also happens to Abraham and others in the patriarchal era. Unlike God's encouraging words to Elijah in a still, small voice, God addresses Job from the whirlwind.

Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and secular commentators have expressed disappointment with God's speech to Job for dodging the issue. Previously the writer of Job had given voice to two profound questions. The question considered in heaven is, "Doesn't Job have a good reason for being so good?" (Mitchell). By implication, the Accuser is saying that Job is bought by his blessings. His goodness is tainted by self-interest.

The question for which Job is most famous is how to reconcile God's justice with innocent human suffering. At the beginning of the book the middle and the end, the poet clearly declares Job an innocent man. He tells us early on that the suffering came about because God called Satan's attention to one of the best men of his time and then permitted awful suffering in Job's life, even the death of his 10 innocent children.

One would expect the poet to answer at least one of these questions in God's speech to Job. But God's speech completely ignores the



Religious News Service

Job

questions angrily debated in the previous 37 chapters. This is a great disappointment to the famous Jewish lawyer Alan Dershowitz, who writes, "Job responds to God's show of force by denying his own intellect ... the God of justice becomes the God of power" (*The Genesis of Justice*).

God's greatness: The content of God's speech to Job on majestic creation adds nothing new. Job and his friends already believe that nature reveals God's greatness. Eliphaz says, "His workings are vast and fathomless, his wonders beyond our grasp" (Mitchell). Bildad says, "He stretched the sky over chaos; he hung the earth in the void" (Mitchell). Job says, "By his wind the heavens were made fair; ... These are indeed but the outskirts of his ways; ... But the thunder of his power who can understand?" (26:13,14 NRSV).

What comes after impasse in Job? It is not an answer to the question of innocent suffering, not a time out to cool off, not a new theological revelation. The answer in the text is reserved for 42:5-6: "I have heard of you with my ears; but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I will be quiet, comforted that I am dust." Job sees his God. After enduring the pain of lost family, reputation, wealth and health, a suffering heightened by a sense of abandonment, Job sees God. Job is content, even before the restoration of health, wealth and family. God is so intimate that he shares the burden of governing the universe with emaciated, itchy Job. God could have read the telephone book to Job and he would have been content with the great gift of seeing his God. His problems are not solved, they are dissolved.

The book of Job is a gift to all ages. An unknown poet writes of God's presence as an answer to pain. Biblical faith calls us to ethical living. But if we are totally consumed by the

Biblical faith calls us to ethical living. But if we are totally consumed by the passion to be pure, we will miss the importance of God being present to us and we being present to God when we don't have life together.

continued on page 8

Impasse: What next?
continued from page 7

passion to be pure, we will miss the importance of God being present to us and we being present to God when we don't have life together. Pastor Gerrit Scot Dawson writes, "Reaching for God in impasse does not necessarily bring any immediate, relieving sense of God's presence. ... The only way through is through. ... Mostly we will have to wait ... to see ... if Good Friday will ever lead to Easter" ("Until the Road Clears," *Weavings*, March/April 1996).

> **We would be wiser to begin with the wisdom of Job and there wait for God's presence. We need the truth that spills over the boundaries of answers.**

Notice how many good lines in the poem are given to Job's friends. They were orthodox, true to the Torah and the prophets. They defended a just God in a moral universe. But the God of Job is bigger than religious truths we can reduce to formulas or creeds. The friends were devoted to orthodoxy and talked to Job. Job was devoted to integrity and prayed to God. And when all the speeches ended, the poet tells us it was Job who spoke of God "what is right" (42:7).

The presence of God grows in importance as the biblical story unfolds. The prophet Jeremiah writes, "When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart" (29:13). The psalmist asks, "When shall I come and behold the face of God?" (42:2b). Jesus claimed that "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20). Paul longs to "gain Christ and be found in him" (Philippians 3:8b-9a). John in Revelation heard a loud voice saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God" (21:3a).

The presence of God finds many expressions in our hymnody. In "Go, My Children" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #433) we sing: "Go my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own." We hear the voices of African-Americans singing: "I want Jesus to walk with me. / All along my pilgrim journey, / Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me."

Present to God: The poet also teaches us of the pain that often precedes our human readiness to become present to God. In his book *Job and the Mystery of Suffering* (Crossroad, 1997), Richard Rohr captures both the enlargement of Job's soul and his intimacy with God when he writes: "God is carrying me, both the good and bad parts. There seem to be only two ways that we know this experientially: prayer and suffering. I think that this is perhaps the central message of the whole Bible, but surely the message of the book of Job."

Job warns us of orthodoxy that is uncoupled from the God of orthodoxy, who is larger than orthodoxy. Today, religious debaters move swiftly to the most relevant Scriptures they can find to support their answers to controversial questions. We would be wiser to begin with the wisdom of Job and there wait for God's presence. We need the truth that spills over the boundaries of answers. We can trust a morality if it has first been schooled in the humility of presence before God. Perhaps a Job who has seen God will offer a sacrifice for us when we do not speak rightly of God.

Victor Stoltzfus is president emeritus of Goshen (Ind.) College and interim pastor at Seattle Mennonite Church.

Thank you!

As of March 22, *The Mennonite* had received $25,991 in donations from 623 readers. Such support strengthens our mission: to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. Your generosity and words of encouragement mean a great deal to us. We deeply appreciate your continued prayers and support.

theMennonite Staff

www.themennonite.org **800-790-2498**

Children's sermon

by David Wright

The children are angry.

The story is too sweet,
too much about love, Jesus,

being kind to neighbors. No
prophet's heads offered

on a king's platter like a giant
frightened apple. No one suffers

God's wrath, no cities burn
to fine ash as sulphur slides

down heaven's holy sluice
to drown the wicked. No one

grapples God to a draw. A woman
(voice smooth as her pressed

flower-print skirt) displays pictures,
all the colors of children possible,

arranged on Jesus' lap like strange
construction paper bouquets, faces

like cotton blooms tucked over
her prim legs. Adults laugh at restless

bodies, cringe as a stocky blonde boy
wanders behind the woman, so even-

toned and unaware, as he performs
practiced karate chops and forms

high kicks over her head. His mother
eyes him from the third pew; he grins,

kicks, grins, kicks. Until she clears
the steps in a terrible blur to collect him.

She contains his flailing limbs in a sweep
of her long mother's arms. He tries

to cry, but she smothers his voice
in her own flowered breast.

The children sit still.

They have glimpsed God's mighty arms
filled with their brother, have seen God's

long reach. They recognize God's
hands could gather them up for good.

Wallowitch

David Wright's first book of poems is Lines from the Provinces. *He attends First Mennonite Church in Urbana, Ill.*

MCC responds to physical and emotional needs of overlooked Salvadoran earthquake victims

HUIZUCAR, El Salvador—In the aftermath of two major earthquakes and continuing aftershocks, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is using many tools for emergency relief: food, blankets, comfort, hope.

In the rural municipality of Huizucar, which has been largely overlooked by international relief efforts, Christian Reformed Church pastor Joaquin Ordoñez and his assistant, Mauricio Rivera, are distributing food to 600 homeless families. The rations are funded by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank in cooperation with a coalition that includes MCC.

Each ration includes 50 pounds of corn, 15 pounds of rice, 15 pounds of beans and five pounds of sugar. Committed to the long process of reconstruction, Ordoñez is also helping distribute 300 MCC-donated blankets.

His congregation is highly involved in the disaster response initiative. About 20 young people mobilized under Rivera's guidance to draw up a census of quake-affected families in the town of Huizucar and 14 area villages.

Reinaldo Morales, an energetic teenager whose own home collapsed in the disaster, participated in the census and went to the capital city of San Salvador to guide the truck carrying blankets along the bumpy dirt road to Huizucar. "School has been closed since the Feb. 13 earthquake, so I've had time to help out," he says.

Time is also required to listen to the experiences of each family in the census. "We have heard this consistently from all of our partners," says David Martin, MCC El Salvador relief coordinator. "People have an incredible need to tell their stories."

Trauma and fear from ongoing aftershocks have taken an enormous toll. Salvadoran Vice Minister of Health Herbert Betancourt reports more than 5,000 psychological consultations for earthquake-related depression and nervous disorders nationwide.

Andres Mego, a Peruvian doctor working with the Christian Reformed Church in Huizucar, lists stress-related symptoms he has encountered among children: headaches, stomachaches, nausea, lack of appetite. Most difficult, however, are the behavioral responses. Children act up, provoking their tired and anxious parents, who may respond aggressively and add to the children's insecurity.

In an effort to respond to these deep emotional needs, MCC is sponsoring a workshop on "Accompaniment and Comfort in Tragedies," to be offered later this month by four instructors from SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary based in Guatemala. The workshop will present a theological framework for understanding tragedy and loss. It will focus on providing participants with skills to counsel those who have lost family members or homes to the earthquake.

"We need to be prepared to comfort without falling into despair ourselves," Ordoñez says.
—*Tanya Chute for MCC News Service*

Seattle quake underscores Lent

One year ago, Seattle Mennonite Church used a broken flower pot as a symbol of Lent. The first Sunday of Lent this year also featured a broken object, thanks to the Feb. 28 earthquake that shook the city.

The object was a sculpture by artist and congregational member Sandy Richardson. Church administrator Barb Adams brought it to church after finding it in pieces in her home after the quake.

"The sculpture drew us into a shared sense of loss as we worshiped," says interim pastor Vic Stoltzfus. "We knew of people who had smaller or larger losses. … The loss of a valuable, beautiful sculpture was felt severely because the artist was one of us. On the other hand, it was a thing, not a precious person injured or killed."—*Janet Toews Berg*

School days

April Warfel, an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Det Udom, Thailand, assists Nathaniel Provost, son of EMM workers Andre and Karen Provost. Warfel is a teacher of missionary children in Det Udom and also assists emerging village churches among the indigenous Isaan people. EMM has 14 workers in Det Udom.

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • March 2001 • Issue 5

Are we ready?

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. (Col. 3:15)

In 1991, two Mennonite Church conferences, Pacific Coast and Southwest, were considering merger with their General Conference counterpart, Pacific District Conference. While two of the conferences were ready to proceed to form two new West Coast conferences in the north and south, the MC Pacific Coast Conference had some hesitation. Was God clearly leading in this direction?

Duane Oswald is nominated as moderator-elect of Mennonite Church USA

In a gathering in Portland, Ore., in 1993, delegates from the three conferences met together to consider integration, and again some raised the concern that we were pushing too hard, too fast. We agreed that Pacific Coast Conference should have the right to say no and that they should not feel pressured to integrate if they were not ready. There would always be a home for the northern part of Pacific District Conference in the new merged conference in the south—Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference.

When it was clear that we were ready to move forward only at a pace that was comfortable for everyone, we all relaxed. No one felt they were being forced to make a decision they were not ready to make. The result was that all three conferences took action to form the two new, merged conferences—PSMC and Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference—in 1993. In 1994, we met together to celebrate!

As we move toward Nashville 2001, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board wants the church to move forward at a pace we all agree is comfortable. We believe that God is calling us to come together as one body. We believe that delegates in past assemblies have consistently led us in this direction. But we are ready to slow down—if we need to—if delegates feel we are not yet ready to take this historic step in the almost 20-year process of joining our witness and service.

Paul admonishes us in Col. 3 to "let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts." Are we ready to let the peace of Christ rule in our lives together as we gather as MC and GC delegates in Nashville? Can we come together to celebrate our oneness in Christ and not worry so much about the outcome? Do we truly believe in the discernment of the community? I'm ready for what Christ is waiting to bring us in Nashville. Are you ready?

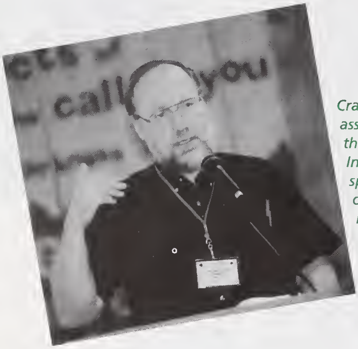
The author, Duane Oswald, is a member of the executive committee of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. He is a former moderator of Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. In Nashville, delegates will be asked to affirm Duane as MC USA moderator-elect.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Others look to Mennonite test case for *missional* church

A non-Mennonite consultant in the Mennonite mission transformation process says mission has not played as central a role in mergers of other Christian denominations. He adds that other Christian groups could view the new Mennonite Church as a helpful case study “to observe over the next decade whether it is possible to shape an entire denomination around an identity of being in mission.

“A shared theology around mission has captured the heart and soul of the whole of the Mennonite church discussion, both in the United States and Canada. That is unique,” said Craig Van Gelder, professor of congregational mission at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., where he is a senior associate consultant for the Church Innovations Institute. “Mission is at the center, not just one more program for which to plan.”


Craig Van Gelder, senior associate consultant for the Church Innovations Institute in St. Paul, Minn., speaks to board and commission members leading the mission transformation process for the new Mennonite Church.

Van Gelder, an ordained Presbyterian and Christian Reformed minister, also serves as general editor for the Gospel and Our Culture Series, the foremost proponent of the concept of a *missional* church. “What *missional* means is that mission is not just one more activity of the church, or one more program that is delivered by the church, but rather mission is part of the very nature, character and being of the church,” he said. “The church cannot help but be *missional*, because it is missionary by nature.”

Tobia Veith (left), COM/MBM worker in the East Asian nation of Macau, describes her understanding of a missional church at the Consultation on Missional Identity, as Cherry Chen of Elkhart, Ind., listens. The women were a part of a dozen small groups whose input has shaped the call for a missional church in the new Mennonite Church.

This concept, implicit in the design for the new mission agencies, has tremendous implications for congregations, conferences and ministry agencies of Mennonite Church USA. “All activities of the church must be viewed from the perspective of how they engage and enhance the mission of God in the world,” Van Gelder said. “Worship must always seek to welcome the stranger. Discipleship must always lead to training people to be disciple-makers. Fellowship must always seek to enfold those on the margins or the newcomer. Service must always be in the name of Jesus with a view towards grace and redemption. Witness must lead to calling people into relationship with the living God.”

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Mennonite Church USA

TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • March 2001
Page two photos – Wayne Gehman, MBM

Printed in U.S.A.

Mennonite.net connects congregations to online MC USA community

A new advertisement for Mennonite.net asks, "Are you feeling isolated"? Many Mennonite congregations today *do* feel isolated when it comes to the World Wide Web. That's why they are turning to Mennonite.net to activate their own web sites that help them become more visible and connect to the growing online Mennonite community.

Formed in 1998 by Goshen (Ind.) College and Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite.net currently provides web sites for more than 2,200 congregations and organizations, as well as e-mail services, news and churchwide information. Mennonite.net is raising the visibility of Mennonite congregations and agencies through a comprehensive searchable directory, site promotion and powerful web site development tools.

Mennonite.net is closely affiliated with the emerging Mennonite Church USA, and is the home of MC USA's web site at www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org. Check this site regularly for updated information about transformation, Nashville 2001 and links to area conference sites.

On the Mennonite Church USA site, congregations will also find connections to MC USA programs and organizations that can't as easily be found through other Internet service providers.

Sign up your congregation for Mennonite.net before June 1 and you'll receive a $50 rebate on the price of expanded membership. For details on how to subscribe, visit www.mennonite.net or call (219) 535-7730. Mennonite.net helps the church present a unified identity and witness among its members and beyond.

t drives transformation

Wichita 1995
Delegates vote to integrate the historic Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. The two churches overwhelmingly approve the new *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.*

St. Louis 1999
Delegates form two-country church structures for the United States and Canada. Transformation of Mennonite Church begins.

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Normal 1989
egates create an
tion committee.

Orlando and Winnipeg 1997
Delegates take action to create a single board of oversight and a single denominational periodical.

Nashville 2001
Delegates in the United States will be asked to affirm membership guidelines and a plan of merger, including churchwide program proposals.

Responding to God's grace together

Mennonite Church USA is the sum of its many parts. Churchwide health depends on trust grown within a common vision. Mennonite Church USA's first fruits funding system is one tool for increasing ownership and trust for a healthy and Spirit-filled denomination.

When hearing the description of the new funding system for Mennonite Church USA, many affirm the connection to spirituality and worship. They also point to a need for greater education. This need brings a wonderful opportunity for each household, congregation, conference and ministry organization to revisit their commitment to God, how we might respond to God's grace together, and the role of worship in sharing that response. The educational process invites us to reflect on what it means to belong to and participate in a new denominational movement.

Mark Vincent, partner in the agency, Design For Ministry, leads this education process. Education resources will include a three-lesson Sunday school series, system documentation for congregational leaders, an introductory workshop offered by Mennonite Mutual Aid at many 2001 annual conference sessions and as a part of MMA's Stewardship University, and consultation with conferences wishing to do additional educational work. For more information, contact Mark at 888-406-9773 or DesignForMinistry@Prodigy.net.

Relying on God's unfailing providence

The providence of God is infinitely mysterious. If Christians could, through our finite senses, eliminate all questions about what God wants of us, faith would be unnecessary. So we fashion our decisions and actions upon a faithful (full-of-faith) response, believing that God is guiding us in the direction God wants us to go.

In spite of our tendency to stumble and detour from the path God desires, there is still a mysterious "power at work within us [that is] able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine…." (Ephesians 3:20.)

Change and renewal in the church forcefully reminds us that faith must flood our corporate life, washing away both doubt and a residue of unhealthy self-reliance. These days invite us to become people of hope rather than prisoners of fear. Rather than viewing things politically—how the delegates may vote at Nashville, or which side is gaining or losing—we choose to rely upon God's unfailing providence.

This kind of "wisdom" looks foolish, even in some quarters of the church. But like Paul, we plot our steps into the future not relying on wisdom alone, but rather proclaiming the mystery of God. We "know nothing…except Jesus Christ and him crucified." (I Corinthians 2:1,2.)

We dare to utter new watchwords to describe our calling as Mennonite Church USA. Among these are "transformed" and "missional." Our intellect strains to define such words. They speak of hopes that reach beyond our definitions. They carry with them the mystery of God "…so that [our] faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God." (I Corinthians 2:4).

James Schrag

Jim Schrag
Executive Director designate
Mennonite Church USA

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"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body."
Colossians 3:15

Mennonite
Church
USA

Mission agencies in spotlight at Grand Ole Opry®

Mennonite mission agencies will take to the stage of the Grand Ole Opry® in Nashville, Tenn., Tuesday night, July 3, for a celebration of God's mission in the world.

The one-of-a-kind mission celebration, "Harmony at the Opry House," will be a featured event at Nashville 2001, the Mennonite Church USA Assembly July 2-7. Leanne Farmwald, Mennonite Board of Missions director of mission education, calls it "a chance to celebrate our history of mission and support from our constituencies over the past 100 years."

The event will combine performances by gospel, folk and country musicians with an old-fashioned hymn sing. "We consider it a gift given at Nashville to our constituencies," says Farmwald. The celebration will set the tone for the new mission structure for Mennonite Church USA. The concert is open to the public and will be publicized in the Nashville community.

In addition to music, Harmony at the Opry House will include short promotional clips about the continuing programs of the mission agencies. Joint sponsors are the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions, the Commission on Home Ministries, Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions.

"We hope this event will raise expectations and excitement in our congregations—the centers for mission in a new mission-focused denomination," Farmwald says.

Mississippi VS unit's legacy continues

Experience led some workers to stay, serve in the area

MASHULAVILLE, Miss.—Old Voluntary Service units don't die. They don't even fade away. Instead, say people connected to the 18-year history of Mennonite Board of Missions' VS work in Mashulaville, the unit continues in the lives of the community and the volunteers.

From 1978 to 1996, nearly 80 young people, mostly from traditional Mennonite areas, came to Mashulaville, a small, rural, predominantly African-American community in eastern Mississippi. Close to a dozen of them still live in either Mashulaville or Meridian, a small city an hour to the south. All of them credit VS with bringing them to where they find themselves in life.

"To me it's impressive how many seeds that unit has planted, how many of those unit members now live in Mississippi," says Melody Clymer, who served as an elementary schoolteacher in VS from 1989 to 1991. "For us, it was a formative experience, a foundation for the rest of the things we've done."

Since their VS days, Melody and her husband, Mike, have gone to Swaziland with Mennonite Central Committee; back to Melody's home community of Harrisonburg, Va., where Mike studied conflict transformation at Eastern Mennonite University; and finally to Meridian, where they are both active members of Jubilee Mennonite Church.

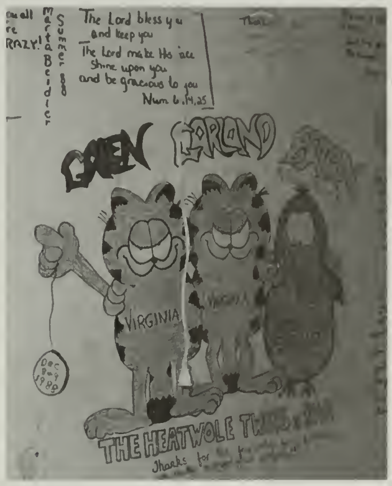
Howie Schiedel spent 1981 to 1984 in VS as a carpenter, helping low-income families build small additions onto their homes through zero-interest loans. That experience prompted him to turn down a chance to join the family construction business.

"I credit voluntary service with helping me make the decision that God was calling me to," says Schiedel, who teaches carpentry at a community college in Meridian. "It wasn't as lucrative a decision … but if you have 10 people carrying a log and nine are on one end and one is on the other, which end do you go help?"

Many of the former volunteers speak of how the people they met while serving continue to be an inspiration for them.

"A lot of the older rural black folks who really weren't that far removed from slavery … their spirit, their character, generosity, sense of history was just amazing," says Mike Clymer, who now teaches high school math. "When you're in that community serving, you feel like you're a part of something important, something meaningful. Teaching their grandchildren wasn't easy, but they were an inspiration."

The VS workers' presence sometimes changed some of the harsh realities that made up the memories of the black community.



MBM photo by Grant E. Rissler

A tradition of the Voluntary Service unit in Mashulaville, Miss., was for all departing volunteers to sign the upstairs hallway walls. The unit house is now owned by former unit members Melody and Mike Clymer. They are among nearly a dozen former unit members who have stayed or moved back to the area after their terms of service.

"Before the VS unit came," says Larry Miller, a local Mennonite who was part of the local pool of support for the unit, "the house was a private agricultural school for white children, kind of an education in how to run a plantation. The blacks had always had to come in the back door or wait for someone to come out. For older black people, it was really special [to visit the unit] because they could come in the front door.

"Though we were not politically involved, I remember a discussion in a small church on school integration. People were asking, 'How can we expect anything to change?' and one old black man stood up and said, 'When I look back there [and see the white VS workers], well, I never thought I'd see this. Because there are whites here with us, we should try.' "

The Mashulaville unit closed in 1996 as volunteer interest in small, rural communities declined. The Clymers now own the unit house and are pondering ways to use it for outreach.

"That was 10 years ago that we were in VS," Mike Clymer says. "There were lives that were clearly touched, and that is inspiring. But the poverty remains as well, and you can see the destructive cycle repeat itself, and so you ask yourself, 'What difference did that unit really make? Would there have been more sad stories without the VS unit?' I don't know. But there are students that I taught that when I see them, they're doing well, and I feel good about that."—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

When you're in that community serving, you feel like you're a part of something important, something meaningful.

—Mike Clymer

Orphans find mercy in Ukrainian church

Despite poverty, members answer God's call with food

We praise God for the willingness of church people to be used by him in this.

—Cliff Dueck (with his wife, Natasha)

KHERSON, Ukraine—A pastor's life has its ups and downs, but one of the best rewards is seeing God at work in the congregation.

Cliff and Natasha Dueck, a young couple in their first year of marriage, are also in their first year of pastoring. Cliff is Canadian, Natasha is Ukrainian, and their small Mennonite congregation—between 15 and 20 people attend regularly—is located in Mis, near Kherson.

In the three months since the Duecks began their assignment with the Commission on Overseas Mission, Cliff says: "We have experienced both hard and easy days. Already we have had one funeral and one wedding."

In a recent response of church people to the needs of orphans in the Kherson area, the Duecks have seen God clearly at work among the Ukrainian Christians they know.

On Sunday evenings, the Duecks often join a group of people who volunteer in the orphanages in Kherson. There are at least four orphanages, and the volunteers also try to feed homeless children living near the Kherson train station.

One evening in late January, as the group was sharing tea together, some of the volunteers brought up an issue that was both "a joy and a problem," Cliff says. Members of a Baptist congregation in a village near Kherson wanted to donate some food, but the orphanage did not have a vehicle or the money to hire one to transport the food to the city. The Duecks offered the use of their congregation's 13-passenger van.

So early the next morning, Cliff and three others drove to the village of Pishanivka. "The village was small, and so it didn't take us long to find the church," Cliff says. "Only one problem: We were at the wrong church and nobody was waiting for us."

They were also in the wrong village, they quickly learned from a couple of women who approached them. One of the women immediately said she would like to donate some food.

"We drove over to her house, where we had tea with her and prayed together," Cliff says. "We left with several jars of canned food, a sack of potatoes and some flour."

Cliff and his cohorts soon found their way to the right village and the right church, where they picked up the food. "The church is small, but its witness in the community is great," Cliff says. "Believers and nonbelievers alike lined up along the central street, bringing out jars of canned foods and pails or sacks of potatoes, cabbage and other products."

When they took the food to Kherson, orphanage staff said that they had brought enough to feed the 80 children for three to four weeks.

"The next day, I witnessed about our food drive during Bible study [at the Mis church]," Cliff says. "After my testimony, one of our church members spoke up: 'Cliff, you said that they gave enough for about three weeks, which means that in about three weeks from now, they will be in need of help again. Perhaps we could sacrifice some of our canned foods in the middle of February.'

"So on Feb. 18, church members joyfully brought to the worship service whatever they could give for the orphanage."

Cliff points out that such giving is quite a sacrifice to the congregational members. "Suppose a villager donated six liters (more than six quarts) of canned food and a pail of potatoes or carrots—this could represent between 9 and 16 percent of a month's income," he says. "Nine liters (about 9½ quarts) of canned fruit or vegetables and a sack of potatoes would represent between 17 and 33 percent. ... The woman [from Pishanivka] gave what could have been anywhere from 45 percent to 85 percent of the monthly wage of the average village worker.

"We praise God for the willingness of church people to be used by him in this."

—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

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Music lessons are noteworthy outreach

Goshen College, congregations target low-income families

GOSHEN, Ind.—Josiah French stared at the notes in front of him, his 9-year-old hands performing the steady pattern of his "finger twister of the week" across the piano keyboard.

"Great," his teacher said, waving her hands with a kind of rapid-fire enthusiasm that made her hair bounce around her shoulders.

French is one of about 50 youngsters receiving $1 weekly music lessons at Goshen College's Acorn Music School at North Goshen Mennonite Church. In its first year of operation, the school offers basic piano and violin lessons for children from low-income families. Several of the staff members, such as French's teacher, Goshen senior Ellen Augsburger, are college students studying piano pedagogy.

Acorn's director is Richard Wineland, a part-time music minister at Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen. He stresses the importance of making music available to kids with limited opportunities.

"I've been playing the guitar for 30 years and been making a living at it for several of them," Wineland says. "The only reason I got involved is because my mother found guitar lessons for a dollar an hour. So what I'm hoping is that we'll be able to light a spark with these kids."

Any family that qualifies for free or reduced public school lunches is eligible for Acorn, which also offers to lend families violins, pianos or electronic keyboards, acquired through grant money, for practice at home.

"People are just so appreciative," Wineland says. "We delivered [an electronic keyboard] to one family living in a trailer north of Goshen. They put it right in the middle of their living room. It was like an altar. They were so thrilled."

Nine-year-old Yareli Garcia has an electronic keyboard from Acorn at her house. Like about half the participants, Garcia is overcoming another challenge at Acorn: the Spanish-English language barrier. While most of the children can speak at least some English, Garcia's teacher, 2000 Goshen graduate Anne Horst, is one of many who know enough Spanish to communicate in both languages.

While Lilly Endowment Inc. grant money will support Acorn for three years, associate professor of music Beverly Lapp said the project will need to find community funding in order to continue.

As French ended a piece, Augsburger objected to the quick way he took his hands off the keyboard. "Does that look silly?" she asked, exaggerating the snappy finish. French smiled affirmatively. She then demonstrated a slow, graceful lift-off from the keyboard, ending with her hands in her lap. He copied it.

"That looks more like a pianist," Augsburger said. "Which you are."

"I am," French said.—*Tim Shenk for Goshen College News Service*

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I Chronicles 28:20

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this date in Mennonite history

March 27, 1790—King Frederick II of Prussia guarantees religious freedom, including exemption from military service, for the Mennonites.

History essay contest winners announced

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church has announced the winners of this year's John Horsch Mennonite History Essay Contest.

Seminary and graduate school class: First place, Ann Graber Hershberger, University of Virginia, "Other Ways in Which We Can Serve: Mennonite Nurses in World War II." Second place, Brian Froese, Graduate Theological Union, "In the Valley of the Shadow of History: Narrating the Mennonite Experience From Europe to the Pacific in the 20th Century." Third place, Steve Hartman Keiser, Ohio State University, "The Emergence of a Midwestern Variety of Pennsylvania German as a Marker of Regional Ethnic Identity in Amish Settlements West of the Appalachians."

Undergraduate class: First place, Grant Rissler, Goshen College, "Intentions in Tension: The American Mennonite Relief Effort to Russia." Second place, Kathryn J. Sommers, Goshen College, "Elizabeth Horsch Bender: A Quest for Knowledge, Balance and Faith." Third place, Andre C. King, Goshen College, "From Sectarianism to the World's Stage."

High school class: First place, Eric Meyer, Bethany Christian High School, Goshen, Ind., "The Church's Witness to the State." Second place, Joanna Souder, Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg, Va., "Outspoken, Organizing Activist: Eugene Souder, a Mennonite Leader of a Different Kind." Third place, Amber Landis, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, Lansdale, Pa., "Adding Color to Our Whiteness."

Colombia mission worker hurt in bus accident

NEWTON, Kan.—Amanda Falla, a mission worker in Colombia, was injured in a March 6 bus accident. Falla and her husband, Gamaliel, serve in Cali, with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. The bus in which Falla was riding between cities overturned, killing one. She suffered facial bruises and a cut to her face requiring eight stitches. She was treated and released.—*GCMC News Service*

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Workers

Hess, Dan and Mary, Broadway, Va., this summer will begin a two-year Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) and Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) term in Albania. They will study language in Tirana, and then serve in Lushnje.

Linsenmeyer, Dean, will conclude a pastorate July 31 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Nussbaum, Larry, is part-time associate pastor at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Sensenig, Gary and Joanne, Millersville, Pa., in August will begina two-year EMM term as hosts of the Mennonite Guest House in Nairobi, Kenya.

Stoner, Kenny and Stephanie, Lititz, Pa., in April will begin a two-year VMBM and EMM term, serving at the Palm Ridge Christian Retreat Center, Retreat, Jamaica.

Births

Eby-Good, Aaron Joseph, Feb. 27, to Carol and Michael Eby-Good, Lancaster, Pa.

Foust, Walker James, March 6, to Dean and Jana Foust, Goshen, Ind.

Hochstetler, Corrina Connie, Feb. 9, to Beth (Endris) and Gene Hochstetler, Shipshewana, Ind.

Kolb, Chloe Jeanne, Feb. 13, to Kelly (Roth) and Steve Kolb, Milford, Neb.

Markham, Isaiah Thomas, Feb. 11, to Tammy (Beck) Markham, Elkhart, Ind.

Newcomer, Madison Lorae, Feb. 12, to Kevin Newcomer and Shelly Richmond, Wakarusa, Ind.

Nussbaum, Jordan Elyse, Jan. 10, to Matt and Veronica (Kilmer) Nussbaum, Orrville, Ohio.

Thompson, McKenna Grace, Feb. 11, to Carla (Miller) and Tim Thompson, Elkhart, Ind.

Weaver, Tate Alan, Feb. 17, to Jeremy and Joan (Steiner) Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Weldy, Thomas Brandon, Jan. 30, to Rob and Sandi (Wenger) Weldy, Elkhart, Ind.

Zook, Anthony Jeren, Feb. 17, to Dan and Zacinda (Brubaker) Zook, Orrville, Ohio.

Zook, Jenna Rae, Feb. 28, to Randall and Wendy (Wilhelm) Zook, Souderton, Pa.

Deaths

Doerksen, Menno, 77, North Newton, Kan., died March 2 of a heart attack. Spouse: Mary Ann Stucky Doerksen. Parents: Martin and Anna Friesen Doerksen (deceased). Other survivors: children Mike, Donna Regier, Linda Linenberger, Marie Schmidt; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: March 6 at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton.

Friesen, Carl, 83, Henderson, Neb., died March 6 of cancer. Spouse: Sadie Pankratz Friesen. Parents: Abraham and Margaret Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Karren Boehr, LaRhue, Lynette Ratzlaff; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 9 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Hunt, Dorothy Earhart, 89, Millersville, Pa., died Feb. 28. Spouse: Isaac Hunt (deceased). Parents: Francis and Elenora Good Earhart (deceased). Survivors: children Clyde, Paul, Elva Martin, Elsie Kreider; 16 grandchildren; 43 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Masonville Mennonite Church, Washington Boro, Pa.

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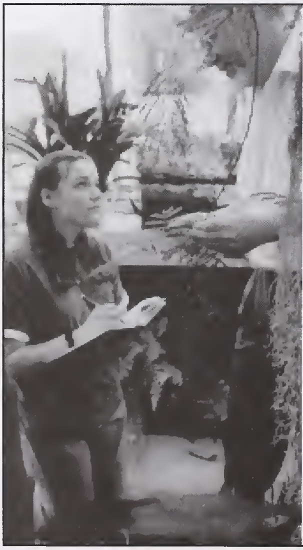

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Kauffman, Mildred Mishler, 88, New Salisbury, Ind., died March 2. Spouse: (1st) Milo Miller (deceased); (2nd) Chancey Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Edward and Mary Mishler (deceased). Survivors: children Dorene Kauffman, Doris Loy, Donald Miller, Deldon Miller, Dean Miller; stepchildren Dorothy Mast, Dennis Kauffman, Dwight Kauffman; 16 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Latshaw, Carrie, 70, Frederick, Pa., died Feb. 27. Parents: John and Annie Latshaw (deceased). Funeral: March 3 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Miller, Alvin, 95, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 2. Spouse: Mary Edna Miller. Parents: Daniel and Elizabeth Fry Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Paul, Floyd, James, David, Mamie Mellinger; 16 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Miller, Reuben, 74, Nappanee, Ind., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Lydia Miller. Parents: John and Emma Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerry, Cheryl Bontrager, Carolyn Jones; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Rice, Lester Wayne, 78, Columbiana, Ohio, died Feb. 2 of a heart attack. Spouse: Lorraine Wing Rice. Parents: Leo and Emma Blosser Rice (deceased). Other survivors: children Connie Neuenschwander, Deborah Glick, David, Jay; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 6 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Sarco, Fannie Kauffman, 85, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 28. Spouse: Michael Sarco (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Molly Shank Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Ida Sue Woodard, Daniel, Michael, Martin Mikaya, David; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 3 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Scheffel, Viola Peachey, 79, Reedsville, Pa., died Feb. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Clarence Scheffel. Parents: Ezra and Clara Bender Peachey (deceased). Other survivors: children Elaine Smith, Clara Kauffman, Ezra, Clarence Jr., William; 19 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Schrader, Ollie Siegrist, 85, Hutchinson, Kan., died March 5. Spouse: Elwyn Schrader (deceased) Parents: George and Mildred Siegrist (deceased). Survivors: children Buford Porter, Don, Patricia Crow, Shirley Loustalot; 13 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 8 at Hutchinson.

Siebert, Wanda Epp, 50, Henderson, Neb., died March 3 of cancer. Spouse: Audrun Siebert. Parents: Alvin (deceased) and Leona Friesen Epp. Other survivors: children Mark, Traci, Collin. Funeral: March 6 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Swanson, Don, 79, Wakarusa, Ind., died Feb. 16. Spouse: Letha Harter Nafziger Swanson. Parents: Joseph and Emma Swanson (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen, Donald; stepchildren Joyce Coffey, Karen Donaldson, Larry Nafziger; two grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; one stepgreat-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa.

Whirledge, William, 85, Millersburg, Ind., died March 2 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Beulah Whirledge (deceased). Parents: Eli and Amanda Whirledge (deceased). Survivors: children Marilyn Taylor, Arlis Krenicky, Almeda Zumbrun, Alden; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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- **Hesston College** seeks ***soccer coach***. Qualifications: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite church, soccer coaching experience. Responsibilities: recruiting players, scheduling games, managing budget and coaching practices and games. Season runs August through October. Bachelor's degree required, master's preferred. Position begins immediately and may be configured as full- or part-time, based on talents and qualifications of the successful candidate.

  Contact Art Mullet, Athletic Director, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8278; <artm@hesston.edu>.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** has one- or two-week service opportunities available assisting with the summer camping program, July 15-Aug. 17. ***Counselors, recreation, music and craft directors*** are needed. Families of a spouse assisting with the programs receive free room and board, and children receive a complimentary week of camp. Three-month summer positions also available in ***counseling, lifeguarding and kitchen***.

  Call Jon Welty Peachey at 1-800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056; email <jon@laurelville.org>.

- **Harmonies Workshop**, Leola, Pa., seeks ***manager*** for events, sales and administration. Approx. 10 hrs/wk to start. Flexibility and competitive pay/benefits.

  Call Glenn Lehman, 717-656-2749 or email <office@harmonies.org>.

- **Raleigh Mennonite Church**, <http://rtpnet.org/~rmc>, Raleigh, N.C., a vibrant, urban congregation, invites applicants for two half-time positions: ***youth pastor*** and ***congregational peace center director***. Couples, minorities and women are especially encouraged to apply. Positions available this summer.

  Please send cover letter and resume indicating areas of interest to Raleigh Mennonite Church, Attn. Jon Friesen, P.O. Box 25545, Raleigh, NC 27611-5545; email <friesen@intrex.net>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** is seeking applications for ***assistant director for Washington Study-Service Year***. The WSSY is a challenging urban service-learning program through Eastern Mennonite University. Students from Mennonite colleges come to Washington, D.C., for nine months of study and service. The core aim of the WSSY program is for students to grow in knowledge, skills and moral and spiritual development through community service, reflection and analysis. The assistant director will foster communications on a number of levels including promoting the program to students, parents and faculty on Mennonite campuses; coordinate the group life component in WSSY including relating to students and helping them adjust to city life; assist with facility management; assist the director with administrative tasks. Qualifications: Bachelor's or master's degree; experience in the field of communications or journalism; relational skills and experience with college students, recruiting skills and urban experience are also preferred. Contract: 20-25 hours a week, Aug. 1-June 30. Salary commensurate with experience. Part-time benefits included.

  Send letter of application and vitae to Kimberly D. Schmidt, Ph.D., Washington Study-Service Year, 3116 South Dakota NE, Washington, DC 20019; <wssy@aol.com>. Application deadline is April 15, 2001. Eastern Mennonite University reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline as circumstance warrant. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to sex, age, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

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by Rich Preheim

The diminishing state of church giving

By the middle of the 21st century, U.S. congregations may be giving little or nothing beyond themselves, warns a study on church giving.

From 1968 to 1998 (the last year statistics are available), the percentage given per U.S. church member to benevolent causes has plummeted 40 percent, from .65 percent to .39 percent, reports *The State of Church Giving Through 1998,* recently released by Empty Tomb, a Christian service and research organization. Empty Tomb describes benevolences as those including the "larger mission of the church," such as local soup kitchens, regional and denominational offices, seminaries and international relief and evangelism.

While the percentage given to benevolences has dropped, the percentage given to congregational finances has fluctuated over the past three decades. In 1998, giving was 2.12 percent per church member, compared with 1.98 percent in 1993 and 2.45 in 1968.

"The data suggests that church members are focusing their attention inward," say the authors.

Overall giving in 1998 was 2.52 percent, up from 2.49 percent in 1997 but still a long way from the 3 percent average of 30 years ago.

On the bright side, even as percentages have gone down, the amount of money contributed by church members has gone up as their incomes have gone up. In 1968, giving to congregational finances and benevolences per church member averaged $368 in inflation-adjusted dollars. In 1998, that figure was $570.

For the report, Empty Tomb surveyed 29 U.S. Protestant denominations, including the Mennonite Church, Evangelical Mennonite Church and Brethren in Christ.

The flourishing state of church living

While the financial news coming out of congregations isn't great, Paul Wilkes has found something good to report. He has compiled a list of 300 stimulating, solid, innovative, caring Protestant congregations in the United States and another list of 300 such Catholic parishes. Wilkes' findings will be published in book form later this year, says *The Christian Century.*

The Protestant group most represented in Wilkes' work is Baptist (presumably of various affiliations) with 54 congregations. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has 36 congregations on the list, followed by 31 United Methodist congregations and 25 Episcopal parishes. Wilkes also cites about 70 nondenominational churches.

Wilkes says his list does not include high-profile congregations such as Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Ill., and Robert Schuller's Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, Calif. Wilkes does recognize congregations as disparate as 4,000-member Riverside Baptist Church in Denver and Lutheran Ministries of Southwest Oklahoma, a series of four Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregations with one pastor in a dying area of Oklahoma.

The bread of life?

A disease has come between the Richardsons of Natick, Mass., and their faith. That is why they are no longer Catholic but instead attend a Methodist congregation.

Doug and Janice Richardson's 5-year-old daughter, Jennifer, suffers from celiac. Those with the disease can become seriously ill from gluten, an enzyme from wheat flour. Celiac sufferers usually use rice-based flour substitutes. So the Richardsons requested their local priest to use a rice wafer instead of the normal wheat one for Jennifer's Eucharist. The priest refused, and the archdiocese concurred, according to *National Catholic Reporter.*

"The imagery of Scripture, prayer and the witness of tradition is consistent in the centrality of bread formed by wheat and wine from the fruit of the vine," wrote an archdiocese official in a memo to all priests, noting that rice wafers aren't even allowed in Asia.

The Richardsons say they are dissatisfied with a church that insists on such rigid rules. "On many occasions we have heard your teachings to value diversity and differences," they wrote their priest before leaving the parish. "However, … we do not believe that our family's differences have been adequately met."

Pastor stats

The Church of the Brethren has crunched the numbers and come up with the following insights about its 1,150 pastors, courtesy of *Messenger,* the denominational periodical:

- Three percent are people of color.
- Thirteen percent are women.
- Twenty-two percent are paid salaries on or above the denominational guidelines.
- Twenty-five percent hold a master of divinity degree or its equivalent.
- Twenty-five percent are graduates of the denominational seminary.
- Twenty-eight percent live in parsonages.

Tidbits

- Seven hundred U.S. churches have been damaged by arson since 1998. —*The Observer*
- Eighty percent of the world's young people—1.4 billion—are growing up in non-Christian homes. —*The Wesleyan Advocate*
- An Alabama law prohibits wearing a fake mustache in church if it causes laughter.—*Joyful Noiseletter*
- The Internet search engine Google.com recently turned up 273 hits for "Catholic jokes" but only two for "Islamic jokes." —*Context*
- The 25-congregation Haiti Conference of the Church of God, General Conference, in 1999 averaged 34 converts per congregation, by far the highest in the denomination.—*The Church Advocate*

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Everett J. Thomas

The Lenten journey home

Lent is the season of confession and reflection for Christians around the world. It is the period of preparation before the Passion of Holy Week and the resurrection joy of Easter. It is a time for each of us to spend 40 days in the wilderness, reorienting our priorities. It is the season to let parts of our lives die so that we can "come home" to a patient God.

Many Mennonite congregations that are currently observing Lent are using a series of homecoming Bible stories suggested by a Manitoba-area writing team for *Builder*. For Sunday, April 1, the writing team notes, "As we near the end of our Lenten journey, acknowledge that the way is often long and hard. New life does not come without death."

One such journey to new life is about the prodigal son in Luke 15. This young man, who wasted his inheritance in licentious living, eventually reoriented his life. Penniless, ashamed and uncertain of the reception he would receive from his family, he finally decided to let the sinful parts of himself die and return home. There he was surprised to find his father waiting to welcome him with a great feast and full forgiveness.

One lesson for us this year, then, is to consider how we have been wasteful with our lives. We consider how the patterns and habits that sneak into our lives continually waste the gifts that God has bestowed on us. We turn the spotlight on the dark corners that hide the dead spots in our souls.

Those who practice this Lenten discipline over the years know that after each Lent there remain permanent changes in practices and perspectives.

The hard part, of course, is being willing to own up to the ways we have been prodigal. Many of us work hard at being good and convincing others of our righteousness; it then seems counterintuitive to come clean about our "badness." But that is exactly the point of a yearly Lenten experience.

Elaine Maust, a pastor, wife, mother and businesswoman, decided that one such stumbling block was her favorite pastime: worry. So this year she decided to live without it (see page 4). It is clear that Maust has relinquished a favorite vice; she located her "prodigalness" at that place where she would rather worry than trust God's faithfulness.

Many Christians get a similar clarity about their problem areas. The habit or vice may be small or large. It may be something like giving up coffee or dessert or watching TV. It could be a decision to have better manners while driving and relinquish those road-rage sentiments that can be so energizing. It may be the time to go to a former colleague who has hurt you, to offer forgiveness and seek reconciliation. It may be the season to spend extra time in daily Bible study and prayer or to begin such a daily discipline.

After we allow the prodigal parts of our lives to die, we respond with confession and then turn toward home where a Heavenly Father waits faithfully for our return. Those who practice this Lenten discipline over the years know that after each Lent there remain permanent changes in practices and perspectives. In fact, this is perhaps the best reason for observing a Lenten discipline each year: By doing so over a lifetime we continually ferret out bad habits and allow God's Spirit to reform us into a likeness more closely resembling the person God created us to be.

Lent is a time to take stock and consider correctives to the parts of our lives which harm our spiritual health. This year we consider such cherished vices as expressions of our own prodigalness. We confess the ways we have wasted the inheritance God showers on his children. Reorienting our lives begins by allowing certain parts of our lives to die.

When we turn back from bad choices, we discover God waiting to enfold us with love and celebration. The long journey home ends with our Heavenly Father running to meet us in the road and preparing a homecoming banquet in our honor.

Just as a plant needs pruning to remain healthy and strong, so must the sinful parts of our lives die so that our souls may bear much fruit. The new life we anticipate at Easter does not come without death.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

April 3, 2001

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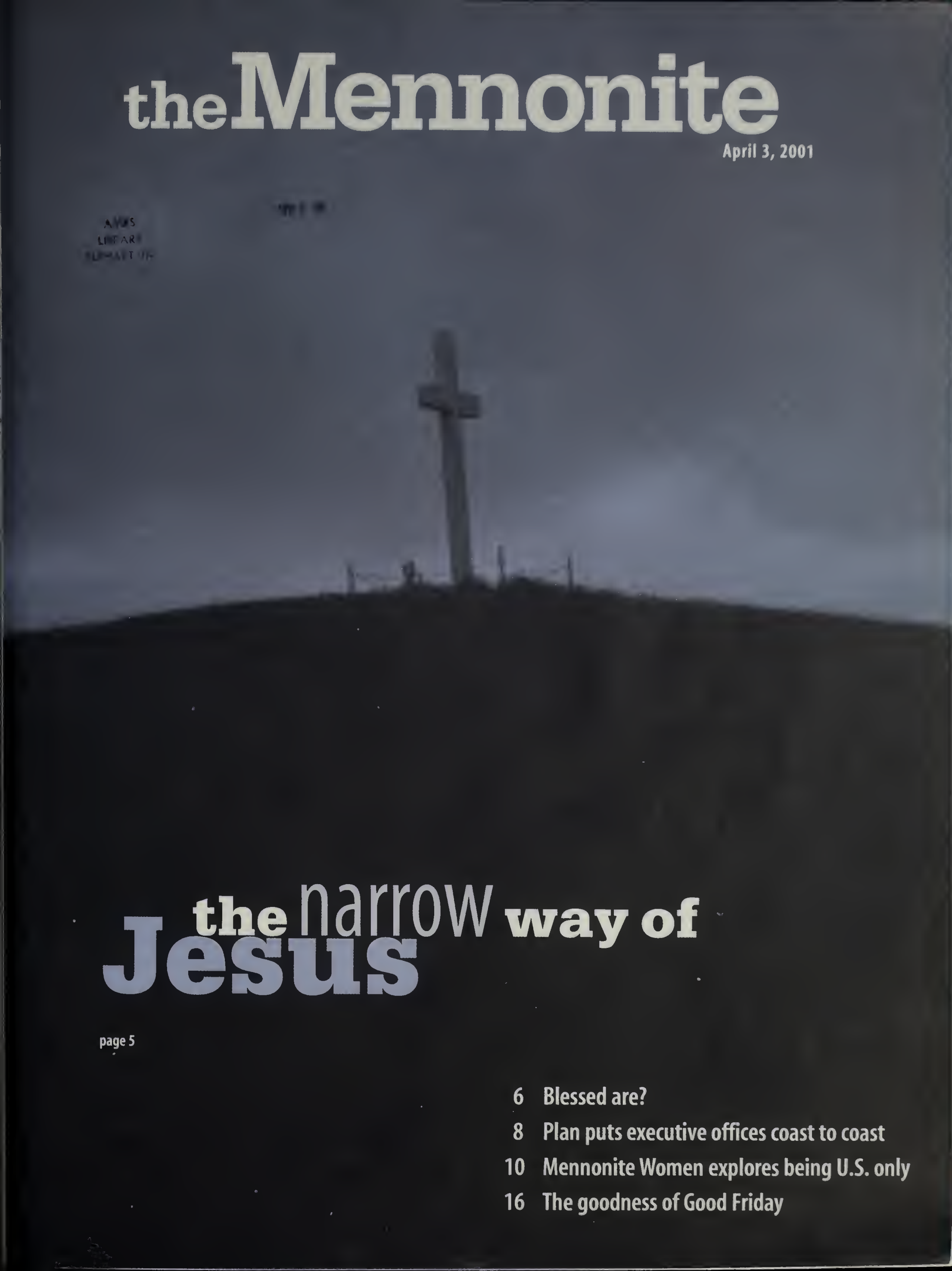

the narrow way of Jesus

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A woman's place

Jason Yoder's advocacy of the principle of the headship of man ("The Head of the Woman Is Man," March 13) fails to address the destructive social consequences of this idea. Not unlike the ideology of white supremacy, the notion of headship of man has a drastic impact on the quality of life for human beings. The headship of man not only excludes women from pastoral leadership, in my experience it has rendered pastors who advocate it incapable of dealing with domestic violence in the congregation. My family, especially my mother, experienced the "pastoral care" of several ministers who were practitioners of Yoder's doctrine.

Despite my mother's calls for help, despite the evident pain caused by her abusive husband, these pastors ignored, denied or discounted the seriousness of abuse. The pastors had nothing to offer a woman in distress other than to advise her to return to the abuser and uphold the doctrine of male headship. To the abuser they could only offer excuses for his actions and reassurances of male prerogative. And when, with the support of all her children, my mother finally found the love and courage to leave the abusive relationship, her pastor condemned her action. Refusing to educate himself on the dynamics of control and abuse, the pastor would not take any action to protect her and could find no time in his busy schedule to meet with her children. That's the cold reality of the headship doctrine in practice.

Unless Yoder can demonstrate the difference, if there is one, between the headship principle and male abuse of power, his idea has no moral authority.

Thankfully, the gospel does not perpetrate injustice and oppression; the truth sets us free. My family has experienced the inexpressible joy of resistance and overcoming. I recommend it.—*Glenda Yoder, Jamaica Plain, Mass.*

As a young woman in her 20s considering seminary, it is disheartening to realize that I am still not valued everywhere for my gifts and desire to serve the church.

I was fortunate to grow up in a congregation where I had many women who were strong leaders as role models and mentors: Mim Book, Michele Hershberger, Nina Lanctot, Marlene Kropf and others. I was also exposed to caring and nurturing male leaders. All these individuals were charismatic examples of what good church leadership is all about. But how much would my home congregation have missed if half this list was deleted because of gender?

I am frustrated at the lack of movement that I see within the church on this issue. The Jan. 23 issue of *The Mennonite* dealt with the shortage of leaders within our denomination and the need for congregations to call out gifted people from among their pews. This seems ironic when many talented women coming out of seminaries (and laywomen as well) are not even considered, because of their gender, as candidates in many congregations.

Everett Thomas points out an important piece in his March 13 editorial ("Yes and No Is the Grace"), that to keep women from leadership roles goes against article 15 in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. I strongly disagree with Thomas that our ability to agree and disagree is grace. I have talked with women whose gifts have been discouraged, and I have yet to find the grace in the discussion for them. Would we find this grace if Miriam had handed her duties over to Aaron, if Esther had decided to be subordinate to the powers that be? Or if Gayle Gerber Koontz, Nina Lanctot, Mary Oyer and June Alliman Yoder had all decided that God no longer calls women into leadership and sat back down in the pews? Would we find grace in the the loss of these influential people and their gifts?—*Tara Swartzendruber, Goshen, Ind.*

Yoder did not indicate whether or not women may serve as pastors. The cover of the March 13 issue led me to believe I would find one article answering that question with a yes and another article answering with a no. Yoder does not say no. He makes a compelling argument from 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 that women should cover their heads. So I assume he means the pulpit is open to women because the precise reason they should cover their heads is for the purpose of praying and prophesying (verse 5). Paul's intent is clearly to free women for ministry.

Those who complain that many women no longer wear a covering should ponder the reason. I would expect women to say, "If the church will not allow us the public ministries of praying and preaching, let's take off our coverings and stop the hypocrisy." There is no need for a woman to have "a sign of authority on her head" (verse 10) if she has no authority.—*Nathan Hege, Landisville, Pa.*

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

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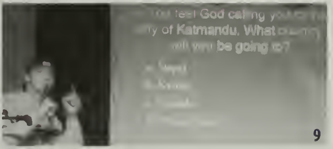
Vol. 4, No. 13, April 3, 2001



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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

Re 1 Corinthians 11:2-16: The cultural practice was that the veil came over the head with only an opening for the eyes and reached down to the feet. Paul was dealing with the problem of modesty. For women to appear unveiled in that culture would make them appear immodest and lewd.

We begin to understand the passage by beginning with the problem first and only secondarily with the teaching of headship. This was brought into the teaching to help the Corinthians with the problem. The current veil or covering worn by some of our women does not speak to this. But if my wife appears anywhere immodestly dressed, she dishonors her head (her husband) and in the same way dishonors Christ and God. Immodesty in any culture breaks down that divine relationship because the wife is, by her immodesty, seeking the attention of men other than her head (husband) and by dishonoring him also dishonors Christ and God.

The contrast between the culture of that day and our day should answer questions about our symbolic veil. In Paul's day, being veiled was a sign of modesty and chastity. In our day, the veil has nothing to do with modesty or chastity. In Paul's day, it was street and home attire as well as for worship. In our day, it is worn mostly in worship services. In Paul's day, it was not a symbol but evidence of proper relationships in the created order by appearing modest. In our day, it is purely a symbol. In Paul's day, the custom did not call attention to itself. In our day, it is not the custom and calls attention to itself.

Four times Yoder's article mentions "artificial covering." In Paul's day and ours, modesty is the issue, and there is nothing artificial about this important lifestyle.—*Norman Derstine, Harrisonburg, Va.*

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Based on photo by CLEO Photography

Imperfect servant

by Ann Hostetler

(for those who want to change the world …)

Give up perfection for just one day.
Feel yourself a creature of flesh and bone,
walk around in the cold, wind chafing
your face, joints jarring as your worn
soles pound concrete.

Keep walking till you face
your deepest failure—not
with clenched fists, not blinded
by shame, but with a detached
curiosity that opens to
compassion. Finger

the glazed wound tenderly
as you would caress the gash
in Christ's side. Wear it lightly
as God's fingerprints. You see
one doesn't have to travel far

to know suffering, though you
may carry it to the ends of the desert
before you discover it's yours.
Before you discover the light
failure lets into the darkness

of the private soul. Polished
by forgiveness, our failures
are the only possible windows
through which to truly see
another human being.

All else is mirrors
and an endless craving
for reflection of our own worthiness.
Remember Christ was wounded
so he could be like you.

Ann Hostetler teaches English at Goshen (Ind.) College.

The narrow way of Jesus

A sermon preached at the Evangelical Protestant Church of Djibouti, East Africa

by Mike Brislen

Let's look at how most people understand this narrow way. We see a fork in the road. To the right the path is wide, smooth and well-trodden. To the left the path is narrow and overgrown. As we stand at this fork in the road, we wonder which path to choose.

Jesus' short parable resembles this idea to some extent, but the way of the Christian life, as we find it outlined in the New Testament, is more like this: Imagine a broad boulevard with thousands, maybe millions, walking down it. The narrow path is in the middle of all these people but heading in the opposite direction.

The Christian life is not simply a minor deviation off the more common path of life. God asks us to take the path that goes against the flow. The Christian life is not simply a narrower, slightly less-used path. God asks us to follow the way that bumps and knocks against those who have chosen the broad boulevard. The Christian life is not simply a more difficult path off to the side. God asks us to pick up our cross and follow Jesus. The narrow path is the way of the cross and the way of resurrection.

The key to this narrow gate and narrow way is Jesus. The way to find and recognize the narrow way is to know Jesus. He is right there at the center of the Christian life. When Christians speak of theology and salvation, we often speak of Jesus. But when Christians speak of ethics and the Christian life, there is a strong tendency toward silence about Jesus.

Jesus says, "Sell all you have and give it to the poor."

And we say, "He didn't really mean what he said."

Jesus says, "If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."

And we say, "Don't try that with me!"

Jesus says, "Do not divorce."

And we say, "But you don't know my husband or wife."

Jesus says, "Love your enemies."

And we redefine love.

Jesus says, "If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two."

And we refuse to even go the first mile.

But it is not simply what Jesus said. He died for his enemies. Rather than calling down angels to defend him, he suffered humiliation and death on a cross.

And when we are looking for that narrow gate that opens onto the narrow way that leads to life, it is to this Jesus we must turn. There is a long and strong Christian tradition of looking to what is often called "general revelation" in order to determine Christian ethics, what this parable calls the narrow way. And this tradition usually leads the church along the way of the status quo. But the narrow way of Jesus is radical and revolutionary. The way of Jesus, when it is followed, turns the world upside down.

In a little more than 200 years, the Christian faith grew from a small group of followers in an obscure corner of the world to become the most influential religion in the Roman Empire. This was because the early Christians refused to be compromised; they followed the narrow way of the cross.

More recently, in Ethiopia, the evangelical, or "penta," churches, as they are called there, grew rapidly under the communist regime and in the early years of the current Ethiopian government. The church and the new Christians depended on God alone and followed the narrow way. Now the pentas have become more accepted; they've entered the mainstream. And the church has stopped growing as rapidly.

We have two choices in front of us. We can make our faith and our Christian life the way of the minor deviation. Then we will be able to live our religion in our own power. Or we can turn and follow the narrow way of Jesus, the way that goes against the flow. Then we will only be able to live if we have the power of God. What will it be?

Mike Brislen is an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Djibouti.

For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

—Matthew 7:14

Blessed are?

The Beatitudes are Jesus' job description for disciples.

by Chett Mitchell

The Sermon on the Mount is probably as close as we will ever get in this life to hearing the voice of Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount is the most detailed discourse by Jesus in the Bible. And it begins with a bang: those mysterious pronouncements we call the Beatitudes.

The message of the Sermon on the Mount concerns a new kind of goodness, what Jack Kingbury calls "the greater righteousness." Not spotless, mistakeless virtue but a goodness that is true to the core of a person. It is not enough to keep all the "thou shalts" and "thou shalt nots"; you have to love your enemies and (apparently) never be angry or covet. The ethic taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is unique in its absurdity; what is the point of an ethic no one can follow?

This ethic of radical love seems to create two problems for anyone foolish enough to take it seriously. First, it seems to demand an impossible control over one's inner life. It seems human nature for anyone to feel angry or lustful. We would have to be a different kind of person to live this way.

Second, the ethic of nonresistance seems almost suicidal in a world of violence and exploitation. We would have to live in a completely different kind of world for the Sermon on the Mount to make sense as a way to live.

That is exactly the point. Like John the Baptist, Jesus is the herald of a new world, the kingdom of God. Jesus' first message is, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (or "is breaking in" in some translations). There are a number of ways to respond to such a message. We can wait helplessly with hope (or dread). We can ask either, What can I do to bring this kingdom? or, What can I do to stop this? as we struggle to become part of the story. Or we can simply wonder what it will be like. I have struggled with these responses in my waiting for a different kingdom.

The message of the Sermon on the Mount concerns a new kind of goodness, a goodness that is true to the core of a person.

As a lifelong liberal Democrat, I spent the 1980s in an unhappy state. I was living in the wrong kingdom. My kingdom, the Democratic kingdom, had been taken away. I could only hate the present and hope for something new.

I was living in hope of a new kingdom that was not really new at all—only different. When my kingdom returned, the Republicans went out and the Democrats came in to sit in their still-warm seats. Same story, different faces. Everything changed, but in the way of the world, everything stayed the same.

The story of Israel has this same quality of endless repetition. The Hebrews were slaves in Egypt. God led them out of Egypt and gave them a new land, the land promised to their ancestors. They thanked God, then enslaved the original citizens of their new land. They had learned a powerful lesson from their enslavement: Make sure somebody else is the slave. Though a king had made their lives miserable and tried to destroy them, within a few generations they were clamoring for a king of their own. When their land was burned and they were taken away to Babylon, they kept the dream of return alive. Eventually they returned, but it was never the same. Alexander the Great was followed by Mark Antony, and the kingdom of Israel became a banana republic ruled by a series of tyrants, each more cruel than the one before.

Still, the vision endured. Someday God would come back and straighten this whole mess out. The Jews would return to Israel and be on the top of the heap instead of the bottom. The world would tremble at the spectacle of Israel instead of snickering. The whole world would see that Israel was truly blessed by God.

God's favorites: There is a difference between blessing and being blessed. When a father says to his child, "I bless you," he performs an act. But someone can be recognized as blessed even if we don't know how they got that way. Some people have an amazing talent for picking the right parents and the right talents to be born with. If God runs the world, then there is a simple equation: Blessed people have been blessed by God; they are God's favorites. Conversely, suffering people are the stepchildren of God: Either they've been bad or there's just something wrong with them. When Israel suffered, they knew it to be the consequences of their disobedience to God. Despite the prophets, the kings of Israel found it all too easy to think in the opposite direction: Their power and success was proof that they were God's favorites.

Those who heard the Sermon on the Mount knew what Jesus was preaching: the coming of a new kingdom. They would have expected Jesus to tell them about it. And he did, but not by writing editorials. He told stories about vineyards and sons and pearls and seeds growing in the ground. They would have expected him to say what he expected of them. And he did, though every generation is shocked and puzzled anew by his rulebook. Finally, they would have expected him to say who this new kingdom was for. Who are the citizens and soldiers of the kingdom of God?

Those who are called to become the citizens and soldiers of the kingdom of God are, without doubt, blessed by God. And Jesus gives us a list:

"Blessed are

- the poor in spirit …
- those who mourn …
- the gentle …
- those who hunger and thirst for righteousness …
- the merciful …
- the pure in heart …
- the peacemakers …
- those who suffer and die for the kingdom."

These are the people the kingdom of God is for, and these are the people who do the work of the kingdom. Their leader was omnipotent yet chose to spend his life healing the sick, raising the dead and bringing the outcasts back into their communities. He accepted being imprisoned and tortured to death in the ugliest and most humiliating way when he had the power to stop the entire universe dead in its tracks.

The kingdom of God is not for "the children of Israel," the Aryan race or a few good men. Nobody gets in by an accident of birth or simply for being a member of a particular group. The kingdom is not for the strong or the talented or even the virtuous. The kingdom is not for the oppressed or the rejected. When the kingdom comes, it will not fix everything by making those on the top switch places with those on the bottom. The kingdom is not about payback or even justice. It is something new. The test is not what you are but what you want.

Purity of heart: The kingdom of God is for those who feel in their hearts the pain of living in the wrong kingdom. It is for those who feel the profound hollowness of this world and its rulers as intense poverty. It is for those who mourn a world that ignores God. It is for those who hunger to see God fill the world the way sunlight fills the sky after a hurricane passes. The kingdom is for those who, in their purity of heart, desire one thing only, "to dwell in the house of the Lord" (Psalm 27:4b).

How will God build this kingdom? Through his power and through the work of his soldiers in the kingdom of the world. These soldiers fight the kingdom's battle with the power of love. God does not want to swoop down and save the meek; he wants them to help build his kingdom out of their meekness. After all, the meek and the weak are not the same.

The meek are the gentle, the merciful, those who make peace. Their power makes no sense in the kingdom of the world but is the only power that makes any sense in the kingdom of God. It is a power that heals and restores, not a power that divides and destroys.

The pure in heart know that the only answer to "same story, different players" is a power that carefully and gently unties the knot of the world. These peacemakers are the children of God because they bring God's love into the kingdom of the world.

The Lamb's war: The principalities and powers that rule our world are ancient, subtle, powerful and profoundly evil. They will not simply fold up their tents and skulk away. The Lamb's war has lasted 2,000 years already and may last many more, for all we know. Somebody is bound to get hurt.

Those who serve the kingdom of God should not be suprised if they are persecuted, hated, misunderstood or ridiculed. Perhaps the cruelest fate of all is to be ignored or to never see the fruits of one's work. All the same, no act of love or devotion is ever wasted. The kingdom is coming, and God's will will be done.

As I reflect on the blessed, I am struck by two things: how much they are like Jesus and how little they are like me. Often I am aware that the deepest desire of my heart is to be right. I hunger and thirst after more income and a faster Internet connection. I mourn for not having everything I want right now. I am better at keeping score than making peace.

To me, the blessed are like firefighters. I owe them a great deal but find it hard to want to be one. Yet I am painfully convinced that Jesus really meant what he said on the mountain: This is what he wants from those who bear his name.

A wise man once said, "The struggle for freedom is the struggle of memory against forgetting." May God help me remember every day who he needs me to be. And may God help us all remember who the blessed are.

Chett Mitchell is a member of Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

The meek and the weak are not the same. The meek are the gentle, the merciful, those who make peace. Their power makes no sense in the kingdom of the world but is the only power that makes any sense in the kingdom of God.

Plan puts executive offices coast to coast

Los Angeles, Philadelphia would join Elkhart, Newton

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—Since the late 19th century, the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) have spanned the continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. The new merged U.S. denomination's offices will do likewise in the 21st century, according to a recently released preliminary recommendation.

The Mennonite Church USA Denominational Offices Committee proposes a model of regional Executive Board offices with new offices to be established "as soon as is feasible" in Los Angeles and Philadelphia in addition to the current offices in Elkhart, Ind., and Newton, Kan. Portland, Ore., and Baltimore are suggested as alternate sites to Los Angeles and Philadelphia, respectively.

The second phase of the committee's plan proposes in five to 10 years relocating the Elkhart and Newton offices: the Elkhart office, now in rented space in a downtown office building, to the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) campus in Elkhart or possibly Chicago, and the Newton office to Kansas City.

The office recommendations were unveiled March 20 at a meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) in Kansas City and are now being reviewed. A final plan is scheduled to be completed by January 2002.

The regional offices would maintain connections with traditional Mennonite population centers while connecting with areas of current and future growth, the committee's report says. Furthermore, multiple offices would encourage hiring a more diverse staff by allowing greater flexibility to where people can live.

"These four locations will each house Executive Board staff and functions, although the number of staff and the functions they perform will likely vary from location to location," the report says. "At a minimum, however, each regional office should provide an equal first point of access to the full range of information, services and programs of Mennonite Church USA."

The Elkhart office was designated as denominational headquarters, although the report says that it is "primarily for the sake of external identity" and "need not signify the presence of any particular staff or staff function."

Committee co-chair Jim Harder called the regional office plan "business as usual in Elkhart and Newton, with new energy on the East and West coasts."

The Philadelphia office would put a denominational office in eastern Pennsylvania's heavy Mennonite population. The city has 21 congregations with 1,100 members, and the region is home to Atlantic Coast, Eastern District, Franconia and Lancaster conferences.

"I guess we're wondering how the church has managed so long without having an office so close to so many of its members," Harder said in his presentation to the CLC.

Southern California has emerged as a diverse and growing Mennonite population. Ninety-five percent of Los Angeles' 2,000 Mennonites are first-generation Mennonites, and 91 percent are people of color. "We feel it is important to get the denomination to that area," Harder said.

The MC General Board office has been in Elkhart since 1985, having moved there from Lombard, Ill., where it had been since 1971. AMBS has offered to donate space on its campus for a new office. The committee's report notes that the AMBS location would be more accessible and that the school represents a long tradition of GC-MC cooperation.

GC headquarters have been in the same building in Newton for more than 50 years. The building, along with the archives on the Goshen (Ind.) College campus, are the only Executive Board properties owned by the new denomination. Kansas City would offer better accessibility by air and is centrally located, the report says. But a move to Kansas City would depend on an increase in local membership. The city has about 200 members in one congregation.

"This consideration is important not just to maintain strong ties to existing consituency support but also to provide a range of congregational home options" for staff, the report says.

The proposed Mennonite Church USA Executive Board office includes the denominational executive director and offices for ministerial leadership, congregational life, finance, conventions and communications. The committee's report notes that the four regional Executive Board offices may share facilities with the four proposed program agencies: mission, education, publishing and Mennonite Mutual Aid.—*Rich Preheim*

MMA joins action on Alaska drilling

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) has joined a shareholder resolution requesting that British-based BP Amoco provide an in-depth report on the possible environmental and indigenous human rights liabilities linked to plans to drill for oil and gas in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

"We want BP Amoco to be absolutely certain that drilling in such sensitive areas is financially and environmentally prudent before any action is taken," says Mark Regier of MMA's Stewardship Investing Services.

MMA and its clients hold 144,000 shares, worth about $7.6 million, of BP Amoco, which is the world's third-largest publicly traded oil company. Regier says BP Amoco is regarded as a company with a difference. BP Amoco has pledged to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by 10 percent by 2010 and is also the world's largest solar company, with 20 percent of the global market.—*MMA News Service*

Transformation gains conference support

One more votes for charter membership, others expected

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—Support for Mennonite Church USA continues to grow as a third area conference has announced its decision to become a charter member of the new denomination while similar action is being recommended in three more conferences.

But with four months to go before the churchwide convention in Nashville, Tenn., other conferences continue to struggle with the question of joining Mennonite Church USA.

At the March 20-21 Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) meeting in Kansas City, Gulf States representative Glenn Myers reported that his conference's delegates have unanimously voted to join the new denomination should it be approved by General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) delegates at Nashville. Representatives from Central Plains, Franconia and Rocky Mountain conferences said their top boards are recommending their delegates also approve becoming charter members.

"Based on the meetings we've had, we'll be surprised if there is not very strong support," said Franconia's Phil Bergey.

Pacific Southwest and Pacific Northwest have already become the first two conferences to declare themselves Mennonite Church USA charter members. Central District last month also announced its intent to join, although it was symbolic because GC conferences are not required to take such action. The decision to join Mennonite Church USA rests with congregational delegates. Because the GC assembly is composed of congregational delegates, all current GC members will become members of the new denomination pending approval in Nashville.

Because the MC assembly is composed of area conference delegates, MC conferences will need to take separate action with the congregational delegates to their area conference assemblies. MC conferences have until Feb. 1, 2002, to choose to become charter members of Mennonite Church USA. Otherwise they will automatically become provisional members for as long as five years. They can also withdraw from Mennonite Church USA.

Franklin and Southeast have already voted for provisional membership, while Virginia said it is leaning that direction.

South Central will decide at its annual meeting in August whether to join Mennonite Church USA. But moderator John Otto said the conference's two districts in Texas and Mexico have already voted to join while nine of the 13 congregations in the Arkansas-Missouri district have already sent a letter announcing their intent to withdraw. South Central's Kansas-Oklahoma district has yet to act.

That ambivalence is shared by other conferences, such as Allegheny. "There are some members in our conference, but a very vocal number, who are resisting and want us to go slow and, in fact, do not want to be part of the merger process," said Lawrence Brenneman, an Allegheny representative to CLC.

Other conferences reported more acceptance of transformation. Indiana-Michigan is discussing the idea in cluster meetings, but CLC representative Sherm Kauffman said, "In my opinion, there is a pretty positive atmosphere."

In other business, CLC members counseled the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to encourage discussion but allow no amendments to the proposed denominational guidelines when they are acted on at Nashville.

"Has anybody seen anything coming that hasn't been dealt with by anyone anywhere?" asked Noel Santiago of Franconia. "Unless we're hearing new, revealing information, then I would agree … [the guidelines proposal] represents our best work and effort."

But Elaine Bryant from Illinois cautioned the group about bringing a proposal that could pass but may not be completely faithful. "Are we about faith and life and practice," she said, "or are we about political expediency?"—*Rich Preheim*

Puerto Rico will not join new church

One Mennonite Church area conference has already decided not to join Mennonite Church USA, Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect of the new denomination, reported to the Constituency Leaders Council at its March 20-21 meeting.

Puerto Rico did not have any representatives at the meeting. But Stutzman said Puerto Rico wants to develop relations with other Mennonite groups in the Caribbean. He also said the Spanish-speaking conference cited language and the distance and cost of attending denominational events in the United States.—*Rich Preheim*

You feel God calling you to
city of Katmandu. What country
will you be going to?
a. Nepal
b. Kenya

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Is that your final answer?

In a take-off of the popular TV game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire,* Scott Miller of Mount Joy, Pa., ponders a question during Lancaster Conference's annual Celebration of Church Life on March 17 in Lancaster, Pa.

Mennonite Women starts exploring shift from binational to solely U.S. organization

LANCASTER, Pa.—In the wake of a decision by Mennonite Church Canada to have its own women's organization, Mennonite Women has created two task forces to reshape the current binational entity into a U.S. one in partnership with Canada.

The shift from a binational organization to two national organizations working together on joint projects follows the pattern chosen by the new Mennonite Church denomination. Mennonite Women formed as a binational entity in 1997, a time when it appeared that the new denomination also would be binational.

The Mennonite Women board, which met in Lancaster Feb. 22-24, hopes to have a proposal ready for members' vote in 2002, with the birth of the new structure to happen in 2003 or 2004, depending on the time needed to make the change in legal status. Until then, current structures and programs will remain in place.

One task force has been appointed to begin developing plans for transforming Mennonite Women into a U.S. organization that would work in partnership with Canadian Women in Mission. A second task force, with members appointed by Mennonite Women and Canadian Women in Mission, will explore how shared projects—such as production of Mennonite Women's annual Bible study guide—will be able to continue.

Originally formed by Canadian General Conference Mennonite Church women, Canadian Women in Mission currently is an association of provincial women's groups. When Mennonite Women was formed through the merger of the GC Women in Mission and the Mennonite Church's Women's Missionary and Service Commission, Canadian Women in Mission became part of Mennonite Women, but there was no parallel U.S. body. Mennonite Church Canada last fall stated a preference to relate structurally to Canadian Women in Mission rather than to a binational women's organization.

Attempts failed last fall to create a U.S. organization parallel to Canadian Women in Mission with both under the binational Mennonite Women.

"We acknowledge with some sadness that we are seeing the end of a dream—the dream of being a binational organization," says president Elizabeth Klassen of Kitchener, Ont. "Yet we continue to look to the future with optimism. Our commitment to keep strong ties between Canadian and American women remains unshaken. We still believe that we have much to gain by working together and getting to know each other."

Women leaders receive funding

Four women have received financial support from Mennonite Women to help prepare for Anabaptist church leadership outside North America. The Mennonite Women board named the recipients of its International Women's Fund while meeting in Lancaster, Pa., Feb. 22-24.

Awards were given to Lina Maria Obando of Colombia, Cristina Paoloa Lizama of Chile and Rachel Bagh and Esther Maddimadugu, both of India.

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- **Ireland** (March 23-April 3 *with John and Naomi Lederach*)
- **Washington Cherry Blossoms/Colonial Williamsburg** (March 30-April 7 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Kass and Ken Seitz*)
- **Alaska I** (June 20-July 2 *with Peter and Rheta Mae Wiebe*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Alaska Family Business Seminar** (July 15-28 *with Henry Landes*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
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Art therapy helps traumatized Palestinian children

MCC photo by Alain Epp Weaver

Children at a West Bank refugee camp draw a mural. Mennonite Central Committee recently sponsored a series of art therapy sessions in the West Bank to assist children traumatized by ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

RAMALLAH, West Bank—It is difficult growing up amid the tensions between Palestinians and Israelis, says artist Taleb Dweik.

"Our children need joy," he says. "They need to be children, to experience the beauty of life. Here, they grow up too fast, they see too many things."

Dweik and colleagues at the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Center in Ramallah, where he volunteers, have been conducting art therapy sessions for traumatized kindergarten-age children in Palestinian refugee camps and isolated villages. Mennonite Central Committee recently sponsored nine such sessions throughout the West Bank. They included face painting, animal balloons, drawing, dance and drama.

The CBR Center is a Palestinian organization that normally works with kindergartens throughout the occupied West Bank to integrate children with physical disabilities into their programs.

Since the uprising against Israeli occupation began last September, Palestinian children have lived a frightening reality. "Children are traumatized," says Abed el-Sami, a CBR social worker. "They see deaths of Palestinian children and youth every day on TV. Some of them have family members who have been killed by the Israelis, and their families are starting to feel the effects of the economic siege Israel is placing on the West Bank."

Palestinian psychologists, along with child trauma experts from international organizations such as Save the Children, have noted a stark rise in trauma cases among children since September. Children have trouble sleeping, cling to their parents, fear leaving their homes and wet their beds.—*Alain Epp Weaver for MCC News Service*

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this date in Mennonite history

April 3, 1976—Herald Press begins selling Doris Janzen Longacre's *More-With-Less Cookbook.*

AMBS appoints new associate dean

ELKHART, Ind.—Jewel Gingerich Longenecker of Iowa City, Iowa, has been named associate dean for leadership education for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, beginning July 1.

Longenecker will be responsible for AMBS's nontraditional and off-campus academic programs. She succeeds Diane Zaerr, who recently took a position in the ministerial leadership office of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

Longenecker, who holds a master of arts degree in theological studies from AMBS, has worked as youth minister for Iowa-Nebraska Conference and campus minister for Iowa Mennonite School in Kalona.

Mozambique flooding spawns MCC response

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee is responding to recent flooding in Mozambique with $165,000 worth of relief supplies, seeds and tools. The government of Mozambique has declared a state of emergency as 80,000 people lost their homes to heavy rain and floods that began in late February. The disaster comes one year after a cyclone caused catastrophic flooding in the southern part of the country, affecting 1 million people.—*MCC News Service*

EMU hires new athletic director

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Larry R. Martin will become the new athletic director at Eastern Mennonite University, effective July 1. He comes to the Harrisonburg school from Towson (Md.) University, where he has been associate director of athletics for external affairs since 1995.

Martin also spent six years as general manager of the minor-league baseball team Frederick (Md.) Keys. He is also a certified public accountant and has taught at Hagerstown (Md.) Junior College and Huntington (Ind.) College. Martin holds a bachelor's degree from Shippensburg (Pa.) University and a master's degree in sports management from the U.S. Sports Academy, Daphene, Ala.

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Events

Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus, directed by Ron Garber, will perform April 8, 4 p.m., in the gymnasium at Butler County Community College, El Dorado, Kan. They will also perform April 22, 7 p.m., at Central Community Church, Wichita, Kan. For information, contact Harold E. Franz, 316-721-9681.

Births

Allen, Cross Joseph, March 8, to Annastasia (Stucky) and Joseph Allen, Hutchinson, Kan.
Diaz, Dalia Sofia, March 10, to Ana (Zorilla) and Carlos Diaz, Ephrata, Pa.
Hinkle, Kathleen Marie, Feb. 9, to Donna and Jim Hinkle, Elkhart, Ind.
Ils, Carlie Danielle, Feb. 16, to Brad and Katrina (King) Ils, Albany, Ore.
Lepp, Treyton Cy, March 8, to April and Greg Lepp, Steinbach, Man.
Mahone, Jordan Dylan, Feb. 1, to Jenny (Shenk) and Lou Mahone, Newport News, Va.
Martin, Philip Lehman, March 3, to Barbara Lehman and Don Martin, Baltimore.
Maser, Timothy Alex, March 13, to Annette (Buller) and Kevin Maser, Ossian, Ind.
Mason, Marcus Lee, Feb. 21, to Brasos and DeAnn (Neuenschwander) Mason, Orrville, Ohio.
Miller, Tayaih Celine, Feb. 20, to Carmelle (Slaubaugh) and Myles Miller, Marion, S.D.
Peirce, Hayden Kenley, March 8, to Cameron and Jeanne (Bontrager) Peirce, Hutchinson, Kan.
Roth, Cole Douglas, Feb. 8, to Jennifer (Gingerich) and Troy Roth, Goessel, Kan.
Shoemaker, Luke Joseph, Feb. 13, to Angie (Harshbarger) and Joe Shoemaker, Elkhart, Ind.
Waltner, Sydney Marie, March 7, to Jennifer (Bogus) and Maurice Waltner, Freeman, S.D.
Wiens, Cayman Erin, Feb. 16, to Casie (Spires) and Kevin Wiens, Moundridge, Kan.
Zehr, Raquel Elaine, Feb. 6, to Jane (Pagel) and John Zehr, Denver, Iowa.

Marriages

Clemens/Sack: Gwendolyn Clemens, Baltimore, and Paul Sack, Baltimore, March 3 at North Baltimore Mennonite Church.
Wyse/Yoder: Anna Wyse, Archbold, Ohio, and Ben Yoder, Iowa, Feb. 25 at Harrisonburg, Va.

Deaths

Fehr, Henry, 67, Steinbach, Man., died Feb. 26. Spouse: Dorothy Fehr. Parent: Justina Fehr. Other survivors: children Lynette Neufeld, Barb Guenther, Ken. Funeral: March 21 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.
Frey, Elias, 86, Archbold, Ohio, died March 3. Spouse: Katherine Frey. Parents: Aaron and Anna Frey (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Roger, Ron, Carol Wirick, Mary Wyse, Jane Tomson, Sandra Stegman, Rebecca Bick, Patricia; 17 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 7 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.
Gingerich, Mattie Bontrager, 89, Sarasota, Fla., died Jan. 23. Spouse: Aaron Gingerich (deceased). Parents: Reuben and Sarah Bontrager (deceased). Survivors: children Ilene Bannon, Lana Lengacher, Iona Slaubaugh, Aaron Jr., Ernest, Ervin, Vernon; 23 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 27 at Sarasota.
Grundman, Mike, 39, Moundridge, Kan., died Feb. 27. Parents: Margaret (deceased) and Milt Grundman. Memorial service: March 2 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.
Kenagy, Orlie, 79, Garden City, Mo., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Lois Harder Kenagy (deceased). Parents: Urvin and Bertha Gross Kenagy (deceased). Survivors: children Verlin, Delbert, Twila Fieker; 14 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Sycamore Grove Mennonite Church, Garden City.
Lader, Philip, 90, Bilaspur, India, died Feb. 28. Spouse: Sundari Bai Lader. Parents: Sukhi Bhai and Soni Bahini (deceased). Other survivors: four sons, four daughters; 22 grandchildren. Memorial service at Janjgir Mennonite Church.
Litwiller, John, 92, Hopedale, Ill., died March 7. Spouse: Marie Miller Litwiller. Parents. Amos and Barbara Nafziger Litwiller (deceased). Other survivors: children Merwyn, Wayne, Norma Hendricks; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: March 13 at Hopedale.
Rushly, Rolla, 92, Harrisonville, Mo., died Feb. 13. Spouse: May King Rushly. Parents: Christian and Susie Raber Rushly (deceased). Survivors: son Ron; 15 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Sycamore Grove Mennonite Church, Garden City, Mo.
Shisler, Willard, 89, Harleysville, Pa., died March 11. Spouse: Marie Souder Shisler. Parents: Horace and Maggie Shisler (deceased). Other survivors: children Margaret Zook, Betty Landis Abrandt, Joan Marie; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.
Vangundy, Margaret Weaver, 96, Waynesboro, Va., died March 1. Spouse: Charles Vangundy (deceased). Parents: Franklin and Cenia Weaver (deceased). Survivors: children David, Edith, Frances Blosser; foster son: Earl Amold; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

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- **Grace Mennonite Church**, Enid, Okla., is seeking a half-time ***student minister***. For further info call 580-234-2078 or <gracemen@21stcomm.com>.

- **Mennonite poets**, please bring a collection of your ***poems to the Nashville convention***. Schleitheim Stage will feature Poetry Hour from 6-7 p.m. daily. We want to hear your voice. Refer questions to <jdanielhess@juno.com>.

- **Rural Idaho community health center** needs ***family practitioners*** with OB to serve uninsured. Three Mennonite doctors on staff of six. Spanish helps. Call Mark Mering, M.D., 208-342-2405, or <mmering@trhs.org>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has a fall opening for a ***teaching position*** in the resource room. Special education/NILD certification preferred. Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich., is accepting inquiries and resumes for two full-time positions: ***coordinator of outdoor education*** and ***coordinator of youth ministries***. Job descriptions are available. Contact Dana Sommers, 616-651-2811; <dana@amigocentre.org>. Deadline is April 20.

- **Shalom Christian Academy** (K-12; enrollment 400) is seeking a full-time ***high school principal/teacher*** and a ***high school Spanish teacher***. SCA is a parent-owned school with an Anabaptist tradition. Send resume to Conrad Swartzentruber, 126 Social Island Rd., Chambersburg, PA 17201; email <shalom@shalomca.com>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., has paid summer positions available for ***counselors, cook, assistant cook, day-camp counselor and maintenance worker*** June 24-Aug. 17. Also needed are weekly kitchen and maintenance volunteers. Information at 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email <bbc@valley.net>.

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- **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church *50th anniversary celebration*** April 20-22. The weekend of remembering will include sharing by former pastors, singing groups, meals, memorabilia and more. Call 941-377-4041.

- **West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship**, Philadelphia, <http://welcome.to/wpmf>, seeks half-time ***pastor*** to join its pastoral team. Candidate must be committed to Anabaptist understanding of faith and desire to live and work in urban area. Women and minorities are encouraged to respond. All inquiries welcome. Renee Warnick, WPMF Pastoral Search, 4638 Hazel Ave. Apt. 2, Philadelphia, PA 19143; 215-681-6534; fax 215-844-6655; email <the.warnicks@verizon.net>.

- **Wanted:** part-time ***pastor*** for suburban Mennonite church in Knoxville, Tenn. Please contact overseer Ed Godshall, 704-462-1707.

- **Eastern Pennsylvania church planters conference:** May 19-20 at Morgantown Community Church, Box 468, Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-5153.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis. Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Kraybill Mennonite School**, Mount Joy, Pa., is accepting applications for the following faculty positions: ***elementary (K-8) physical education teacher*** and an ***elementary (K-5) principal*** (part-time). Call for an application or send resume to John Weber, Administrator, 598 Kraybill Church Rd., Mount Joy, PA 17552; 717-653-5236; fax 717-653-7334; email <weber@kraybill.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for part-time ***middle-school English teacher*** (middle school or elementary cert. preferred). Come teach in warm supportive school community! More information on HMS at <http://www.hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>. Send resumes to Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email <tgb@hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***elementary 4th-grade teacher, middle school science/math, middle school Bible/social studies***. Bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required. Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Bluffton College** seeks candidates for a tenure track position in ***secondary childhood education***. Doctorate required, A.B.D. considered. Evidence of effective teaching crucial; certification in adolescent/young adult (secondary) education. Areas of expertise to be considered include English and social sciences. Experience: undergraduate- and graduate-level teaching in higher education preferred; a minimum of three years teaching at the secondary level; student teaching supervision experience. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate education courses in educational foundations, curriculum methods, assessment and classroom management. Supervise field experiences and student teachers. Rank and salary dependent on qualifications. Review of applications begins March 30, 2001, and continues until an appointment is made. For additional information, see <http://www.bluffton.edu>. Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of reference (submitted directly from the referee) and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** is seeking applications for ***assistant director for Washington Study-Service Year***. The WSSY is a challenging urban service-learning program through Eastern Mennonite University. Students from Mennonite colleges come to Washington D.C. for nine months of study and service. The core aim of the WSSY program is for students to grow in knowledge, skills and moral and spiritual development through community service, reflection and analysis. The assistant director will foster communications on a number of levels, including promoting the program to students, parents and faculty on Mennonite campuses; coordinate the group life component in WSSY, including relating to students and helping them adjust to city life; assist with facility management; assist the director with administrative tasks. Qualifications: Bachelor's or master's degree; Experience in the field of communications or journalism; relational skills and experience with college students, recruiting skills and urban experience are also preferred. Contract: 20-25 hours a week, Aug. 1-June 30. Salary commensurate with experience. Part-time benefits included.

  Send letter of application and vitae to Kimberly D. Schmidt, Ph.D., Washington Study-Service Year, 3116 South Dakota NE, Washington, DC 20019; <wssy@aol.com>. Application deadline is April 15, 2001. Eastern Mennonite University reserves the right to fill this position before the application deadline or to extend the deadline, as circumstance warrant. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to sex, age, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

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Answers to questions about not paying war taxes

by Stanley Bohn

A young rabbi, candidating at his first congregation, asked Anita (my wife) and me how to explain to his prospective employer that he is a conscientious objector to paying war taxes. We gave him spiritual and emotional support but could not provide a way he could assure that congregation that there is no risk in employing someone who refuses to pay the military part of his tax.

He contacted us because every year we explain to the Internal Revenue Service why we are illegally sending less than the amount owed. The letter usually says that we are trying to live the Jesus way and cannot fund the military ventures of our government (at present in Colombia, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, covert CIA operations we don't know about, arms sales to both sides of conflicts and expenditures on the arms race in outer space caused by the new missile defense system). So we send to IRS that part of what we owe that supports constructive programs but withhold the part that supports killing people overseas.

Our letters over the years have explained the following: (1) that we don't want to avoid taxes and would pay more if we could support people-benefiting programs, (2) that the money we withhold is not kept but diverted to agencies such as Mennonite Central Committee that work at aiding war victims and preventing war, (3) that we don't want to take this kind of illegal action but don't know what else to do and still be followers of Jesus. Sometimes we add that legislation that would end our dilemma, the Freedom of Religion Peace Tax Fund Bill, has support in Congress but has not yet been approved.

Could we have chosen alternatives that are legal? Could we give more to charity, making less tax obligation? Could we instead do educational witnessing by handing out charts at the post office on April 15 showing that almost half the national budget goes for past and present military programs? Could we write legislators who make tax laws rather than to the IRS, which merely implements them? Yes. We have also done those kinds of witnessing.

What were the consequences of diverting part of our income tax payments to war relief and prevention agencies? Courteous ignoring.

After several months the IRS may send a letter ignoring what we said but helpfully suggesting that we can ease the financial strain by paying in installments. We explain again that poverty is not the problem but that we are trying to live as Christians. Months later a reply tells us that if we pay by a certain date we can avoid more interest and penalty charges. The correspondence continues with us sharing our deepest convictions and IRS sending polite computer-generated notifications.

Finally, notification comes that the money owed will be taken from our bank account. We are not surprised, since this is what has happened for more than 20 years.

Financially, the cost has been affordable. When penalties and interest are added, we usually are charged about 20 percent more than what we diverted to peace and relief groups. We accept this as a cost of witnessing and are glad we can still afford to do it.

In earlier years, IRS correspondence contained warnings of unspecified severe penalties, but now this happens less often. When IRS letters listed 800 numbers for further contact, we called, and staff listened politely. Once we were allowed an interview. Contacts were courteous—once with opposing arguments and once with sympathy—but usually patient listening by people dealing with problem taxpayers.

Is this a worthwhile, valuable witness to the Jesus way? We believe it is. People from other countries suffering from U.S. policies are encouraged when they hear there is this kind of Christianity in the United States. Maybe our witness reduces resistance to Christian missionaries who are identified with U.S. self-interest and militarism.

Paradoxically, these people also admire a government that allows this kind of dissent, which is not permitted in their countries.

Tax diversion can be done for another reason: It carries out the spirit of Jeremiah's call to the exiles, to "seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7). If we care about our nation's addiction to violent, self-destructive solutions, we need to find a way to seek its welfare. Tax diversion can be a way of intervening, refusing to be co-dependent for the addict.

If we care about our nation's addiction to violent, self-destructive solutions, we need to find a way to seek its welfare. Tax diversion can be a way of intervening, refusing to be co-dependent for the addict.

Christians who find themselves living in a superpower have a special responsibility. Though this responsibility of ours seems an impossible task, God has ways to heal the addicted. When people have stopped being co-dependents and no longer support the habit, addicts have been helped to recover.

Stanley Bohn is a retired Mennonite pastor in Newton, Kan.

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Everett J. Thomas

The goodness of Good Friday

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.—the Jesus Prayer

The Jesus Prayer is based on a simple plea by the contrite tax collector in Luke 18. It became known as the Jesus Prayer during the Middle Ages. So powerful was its effect that for a period of time church officials were concerned about its use.

The days before Easter are an especially appropriate time for us to pray the Jesus Prayer ourselves. As we approach the holiest week in the Christian year, our focus is drawn to the day known as Good Friday. For three hours—from noon until 3 p.m.—Jesus dangled from a wooden cross with nails in his hands and feet. Those hours and the days that followed became ground zero of all human existence for those who believe that this man was God's Son and died for our sake.

The most difficult part of the story is Jesus' suffering. The physical suffering was horrific but not much different from the suffering endured by the two criminals writhing on their crosses beside Jesus. The greatest suffering was being abandoned by God, whom Jesus described to his disciples with the endearment, "Abba, Father."

As if to be sure future generations would not miss the panic and terror in Jesus' voice, Matthew 27:46 records Jesus' desperate prayer in two languages: " 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' "

In the midst of physical agony and personal pain ... Jesus gazes back at us with all the love and forgiveness in the universe.

Why did God forsake Jesus? How could a loving heavenly Father abandon his helpless child at the very moment when enemies were destroying him?

Parents know a primordial rage that wells up from the subconscious whenever their children are threatened. Perhaps there is no emotion as pure as that myopic anger that erupts involuntarily when one's child is about to be hurt by enemies. The eyes focus on nothing except that which threatens our offspring.

How devastating it must have been, then, for the great, loving Creator of this universe to watch as his "only begotten son" was tortured and finally left to a slow death with thorns on his head and a gash in his side. How absolutely impossible would it be for any parent to stand by objectively. Perhaps the rage and anger were so great for God that abandoning his son was the only choice—other than instantaneously obliterating the world. But God did not obliterate the world when it visited such ugly vengeance upon his child. In fact, God so loved the world that he gave up his only son so that all of us could be saved.

And this only begotten son, hanging from the cross in physical agony, was further wounded by God's abandonment at that critical moment.

It is then when the two criminals have their brief conversation in Luke 23. One adds to Jesus' misery by deriding him. The other rebukes the first and asks Jesus to remember him when Jesus arrives in his kingdom. Jesus promises the second criminal that he will indeed be with him that same day in paradise.

Imagine the look of love and forgiveness in Jesus' eyes as he assures the righteous criminal. Then imagine Jesus looking into our eyes with the same look.

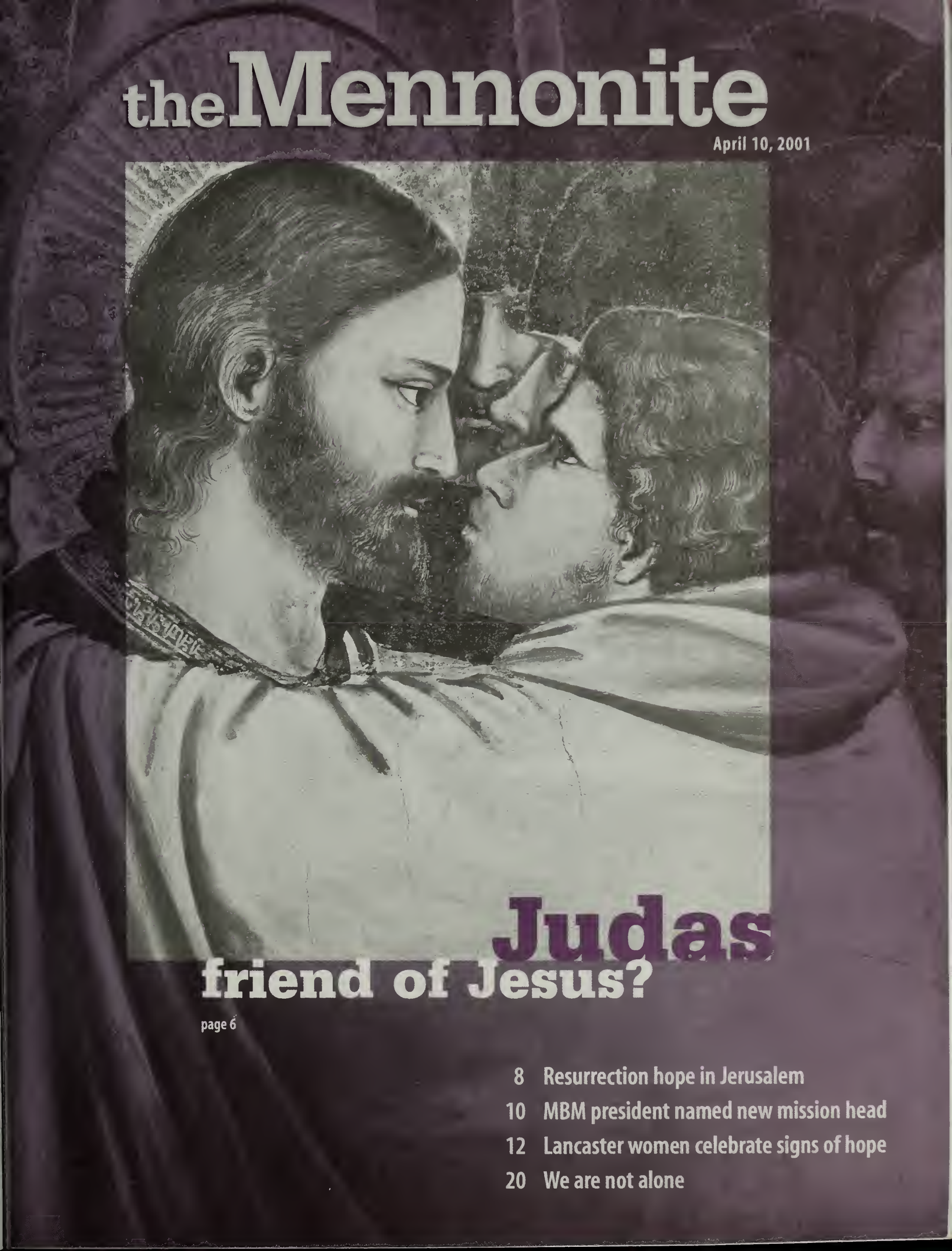
In the midst of physical agony and the personal pain of being abandoned by his heavenly Father, Jesus gazes back at us with all the love and forgiveness in the universe. The look, however, includes an element of expectation. Jesus not only shows through his eyes the depth of his pain but somehow signals that his expecations for us are linked to this pain. Jesus does not want to make the sacrifice for nothing.

At that moment, the Jesus Prayer offers the only words that need saying. We look into his eyes and linger on each word, "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

This is the center of Holy Week. This is the purpose of Passion Week. This is the goodness of Good Friday. May God have mercy on us, sinners all.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

April 10, 2001



Judas friend of Jesus?

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: <theMennonite@gcmc.org>. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Man, woman, Spirit, Scripture

Two articles in the March 13 issue, "I Will Pour Out My Spirit on All Flesh" and "The Head of the Woman Is Man," promote unity in the Spirit among our extended Mennonite family. Thanks for presenting this unity. Part of being family in Christ is that we can disagree and stay in the family.

It seems the postmodern permeation of our Mennonite family has left us grappling with a biblical hermeutics conflict between cultural relativism and literalism. It's an enormous task to separate out what's for us and what was just for the first readers in the Bible. Both these articles are bent on this task. I praise God that the grace of Jesus and communion of us "saints" is built up among us in spite of the otherwise uselessness of this pursuit. It's difficult to avoid being divisive. Amazingly, both writers had clear statements of beliefs and the logical support for their opinions without rancor and implications of absolute orthodoxy.

But how much better to use all the anthropological, sociological and cultural theory—in other words, the best science available—to understand how those first readers understood all these words from the Holy Writ and leave it there? Then let the local congregation have full authority over all hermeneuticisms. We European Mennonite folk do not find it easy to cast off our perceptual hangups (paradigms) to see the power that was in the New Testament before it was written, and the same power is available to us today in the Bible.

There is power in this kind of spiritual unity where diversity of interpretation is welcome. By brazenly printing the different points of view with well-written, tactful articles, I think we will find the best way of confronting sin that leads us to biblical righteousness. In my opinion, this is Jesus' way, and it is the only way. But as Jesus demonstrated in the only historically provable event recorded in the New Testament, his execution via the Roman cross, it's not painless. Following him still takes courage.—*David Graber, Hardin, Mont.*

I've experienced considerable personal pain in my life from the lack of clarity concerning the roles of men and women. I commend you for publishing viewpoints on each side. As a woodworker, I found "The Head of the Woman Is Man" to be a carefully crafted solid-oak article, but since it is pricey and not in style, it will probably be hard to sell. "I Will Pour Out My Spirit on All Flesh" is more in keeping with the popular trend. It looks acceptable even though it has flakeboard components. I appreciated the article's noting that Jesus Christ is the ultimate Word of God, not the Bible, and that only those filled with the Spirit can rightly interpret Scripture. Would not another avenue be seeking the consensus of Spirit-filled believers? Tradition, reason and experience seem to be shoddy materials.

The March 13 editorial pats us on the back and thanks God for the grace among us to accept disunity on this issue. Looking at differences from an editor's office may be different than sitting in a service on Sunday morning where one member is finding enjoyment and another is chafing. Would it be more gracious to refrain from either yes or no? As the disciples were slow in understanding, we also may be missing something more important. —*Merrill M. Derstine, Harleysville, Pa.*

I applaud Jason Yoder for having the courage to write "The Head of the Woman Is Man." When I was in high school, the prayer veiling was listed as one of the seven ordinances of the Mennonite Church. What happened along the way? Who came up with the brilliant idea that 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 is not relevant?

In case you believe the prayer veiling was just a Mennonite practice, I visited a Free Presbyterian congregation where practically all the women wore something on their heads. —*David L. Umble, West Chester, Pa.*

Thanks so very much for publishing "The Head of the Woman Is Man." I am one who still believes and practices the head covering. There is a reason that this is in Scripture and thus was meant for us today as well as in Bible times.—*Betty G. Denlinger, Lititz, Pa.*

Blessed

While recuperating from a bit of surgery recently, I spent the day resting and reading. I was blessed as I read the March 20 issue from cover to cover. Two articles were especially meaningful: Arthur Paul Boers' sharing his family's pilgrim hike in Ireland and Jan Johnson's "Meditation Not So Mysterious." I also enjoyed hearing from our Mennonite Church USA leaders, how ex-gang members in Honduras are having tattoos removed, that most church agencies met 2000 expenses and Jakob and Lilli Rempel's interesting account of coming from Germany to the United States for a two-year Mennonite Disaster Service term. It

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 12856, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

was with concern that I read "Publishing Has Hard Issues to Cover." I ended my reading with Everett Thomas' editorial about his first 100 days as editor. May God bless him richly as he starts the next 100 days, continuing to help us grow in our faith and carry out our mission.—*Rachel S. Fisher, Goshen, Ind.*

I was blessed and encouraged as I read Arthur Paul Boers' "A Pilgrimage Parable." It was a reminder that we travel not alone in life's journey but beside others who assist and encourage us in our walk. His story showed a wonderful parallel to one climbing to the mountaintop and of our own spiritual journey. We were reminded that being faithful is no guarantee of smooth sailing in our walk, but we will experience joys and encouragement along the way. What a great lesson to be learned during this Lenten season.—*Vonnie Amstutz, Kidron, Ohio*

Peace in the Middle East

I hear it over and over again on TV and radio: "Palestinians do not want peace." Just how does the Western media reach such a conclusion? From looking through lenses heavily tainted by billions of dollars in subsidy to an oppressive, United Nations-defying state of Israel, that's how.

If you were living on land lived on by your ancestors for thousands of years and had your homes bulldozed, were not permitted the use of many roads, were denied access to water and jobs and were forced to produce identity papers at frequent checkpoints—would you call such a life "peace"? Would you be content living like that?

Violence in the Middle East will not cease or diminish until some semblance of freedom and justice is initiated by Israel toward Palestinians. This is not likely to happen without heavy pressure from an outraged world community.—*Menno J. Ediger, Mission, B.C.*

Cover illustration from "Kiss of Judas" by Giotto

We are especially excited about moving to an increasingly pastoral tone in both news reporting and feature article selection.

—Cheryl Zehr Walker, "Magazine Board OKs Redesign Proposal," Feb. 13

Meetinghouse ethic

Twice in the past two months *The Mennonite* has alluded to adopting a more "pastoral tone" to accompany its forthcoming design changes. We are concerned about the implications of this admittedly nebulous phrase. Does an enhanced pastoral tone suggest a shift away from news and feature articles? Will *The Mennonite* function primarily as a type of churchly guidance counselor, prodding the flock toward a proper understanding of integration?

We remain attached to notions of the periodical as meetinghouse—a space for reflection, exchange of ideas, provocation, news and, yes, lists of weddings and births. These are essential elements for a faith tradition that emphasizes community, peoplehood and diversity. The meetinghouse ethic should set *The Mennonite* apart from Sunday school materials and other church publications, all of which have their places.

Much good has derived, and will derive, from the collaborative spirit of this era of denominational evolution. It would be a shame, however, if *The Mennonite* fails to maintain a breathing distance from the institutional apparatus of transformation. Fresh perspectives, good journalism and probing news—not sermons—should define a new *The Mennonite* for a new denomination.—*Steven P. Miller and Jessica King, Pittsburgh*

When we incorporate faith practices throughout the whole meeting, it transforms all that we do.

—Brenda Glanzer Lilliston, "Turning Meetings Into Holy Ground," March 13

The church's business

The article "Turning Meetings Into Holy Ground" (March 13) implies, by quoting Brenda Glanzer Lilliston, that past general assemblies lacked spirituality and prayer. So she and Jonathan Smith are now going to correct that by serving as Worshipful Work facilitators at the July assembly in Nashville, Tenn.

With this statement, "Over time, Worshipful Work means a shift from doing business strictly according to the corporate model [such as through parliamentary procedure] to taking time to prayerfully discern what is God's yearning for us in this time and place," Lilliston asserts that parliamentary procedure and worship/prayer are incompatible. I have served as parliamentarian of the Mennonite Church general assemblies since 1985 and remember many special prayers that were offered immediately before a vote and at other times, and I remember interlacing of worship and business meetings.

So I am offended by the implication that delegates and moderators of past assemblies were not listening to God and that somehow good business meeting rules are hurtful to prayer/worship.—*Al Albrecht, Goshen, Ind.*

Preserving life

Harley Hofstetter implies that being willing to kill our enemies (or at least some people being willing to kill their enemies) defines the range of possibilities of taking some/any action for self-preservation from enemies (Readers Say, March 13). There are all kinds of actions other than killing or war that may contribute to self-preservation (not to mention preservation of "the enemy," whose life is also precious). Has Hofstetter heard of nonviolent direct action, nonviolent resistance, doing justice, loving mercy, withholding consent, war tax resistance, compassion, love, service, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Witness for Peace, Peace Brigades International, citizen power, work stoppages, democracy, prayer, etc? I don't think Jim Amstutz was ruling out any of these activities ("Say No to Self-Preservation," Feb. 20).

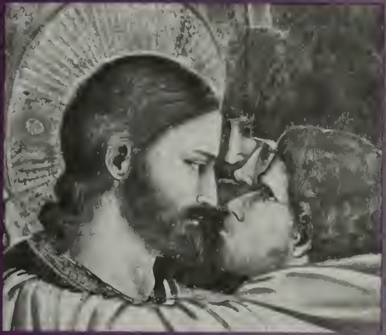
To take just one of Hofstetter's analogies, medical practice, the morality that guides it says, "First do no harm." That would not be a bad morality to define what is acceptable in the line of self-preservation. Jesus put it this way: "Is it lawful (on the Sabbath) [in your just war system] to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" (Mark 3:4a). Nobody in the synagogue that day needed a stack of books to find the right answer to Jesus' question.—*John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

Yells from across the Pacific

I just wanted to say a word of appreciation for *The Mennonite*'s emphasis on mission. The article on Willis and Byrdalene Horst was excellent ("30-Year Mission Veterans Still Building Faith on Spirituality of Indigenous Argentinians," Feb. 6). I have been serving in Argentina since 1960 and can certify that the Horsts have done a good job. Methods always vary, and they must not be made an issue, but the gospel has been preached and the church edified by their lives. I also appreciated very much the informative emphasis on Indonesia, explaining the work of the three synods, and their marvelous evangelistic and peace efforts (March 6). We churches from across the Pacific yell, "Praise the Lord for his wonderful works!"—*Mario O. Snyder, Buenos Aires, Argentina*

Trust the Holy Spirit

I totally agree with Art Smoker's letter (Readers Say, March 20). I am in my 70s, and I remember many things in the past that have divided us and caused us to lose members in the church. I pray that we trust the Holy Spirit to do the leading, directing and guiding.—*Sara Landis, Sellersville, Pa.*



A detail from Giotto's "Kiss of Judas"

Two brothers

by Amy Spencer

1.

We started out so fine
—people loved us

then he began to say too much.

One night …
bread and
—"Do it quickly" and

No use feeling guilty now.
There are other torments here.

But how I burned on that last, stark day.
Leaning against a stone
wall, I heard a goat yell.

Coins crowded
in a leather pouch hung
by a string
—I didn't want the money
I only wanted out—
"What is that to us?
That is your responsibility."

I flung it
against the temple wall—
thirty shining Caesars falling,
laughing as I turned and ran.

My blood money—used just as Jeremiah said—
and my body rots in their potter's field,
their field of blood

2.

Where are you now, my brother?
We were kin for a time
then you betrayed
and I denied—and suddenly—

Do you understand?
The stone was pushed away!

If only you had waited with us.

Amy Spencer lives in Kalona, Iowa.

Judas friend of Jesus?

A reassessment of Judas from the Bible and archaeology

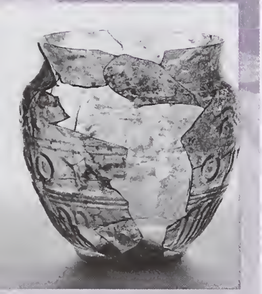
by William Klassen

Over the centuries, preachers have denounced, even cursed, Judas. It behooves us to reflect on the stories in the Gospels, especially what Jesus himself said about Judas. We note that Jesus apparently never scolded Judas and certainly never called him "Satan" as he did Peter (Matthew 16:23).

Matthew's arrest scene: Building on Mark's account, Matthew describes Jesus' agony in the solitude with three disciples when he wrestles with the question, "Can this cup pass, or must I drink it?" The cup here, as in Jewish history, is the cup of suffering and death. Jesus has no desire to die.

Moreover in his agonizing hours of decision, it appears God becomes increasingly distant and avoids giving a clear answer. The disciples are no help; the Passover wine and lamb have made them drowsy. Besides, suffering does not attract any of them. When the possibility of Jesus' death first came up, Peter strongly tried to dissuade him from drinking that cup (Matthew 16:22).

Courtesy photo



A first-century drinking cup

As so often happens in a moment of crisis, Jesus is totally alone. God does not step into the breach with a ringing encouragement.

After the third attempt to get an answer and to get his disciples to join him in wrestling to find the will of God, Jesus decides to meet his fate. From now on he is docile toward the authorities but continues to be forthright with his disciples. It appears he is on his own, no disciple by his side. Mark vividly describes his decision with, "The hour has come" (Mark 14:41), which can be translated, "[The cup of wrath] has been poured." According to Matthew, Jesus takes the initiative by going to meet the party that has come to arrest him.

The greeting to Judas: Judas greets Jesus with the words, "Shalom, rabbi," a traditional Jewish greeting between friends who pray the gift of God's wholeness for each other. He reinforces this greeting with the kiss of peace, which Judas offers to Jesus, as apparently was their custom. Only Mark and Matthew say that he "kissed him warmly." The Greek shift from the ordinary word for "kiss" to this more intensive verb has baffled many scholars.

Even commentators who have little good to say about Judas cannot avoid this kiss. While often described as a "kiss of betrayal," indeed as a "Judas kiss," there is no reason to think that it was insincere or devious. Moreover, Jesus seems fully to cooperate with it. After all, there is no indication in Mark or Matthew that any questions are raised about its appropriateness (Luke may have seen a problem here). As a practicing Jew, Jesus had to rebuke Judas if he is about to commit a sin. He does the opposite.

Jesus' address to Judas as friend: Matthew thickens the narrative with the vivid words of Jesus added to the kiss, "Friend, you are here for this" (Matthew 26:50, my translation). Just as the kiss has been rejected by commentators as dissimulation, so here this warm greeting of Jesus to Judas has been dismissed as sarcasm or irony. Scholars point out that in two of the other places in Matthew (20:13; 22:12) where this word for "friend" is used it is at least a mild scolding, so it must be here as well. But it is hardly that in Matthew 11:16, where it appears in some manuscripts.

Would Jesus really have called him a friend if he saw him as an enemy? Why not treat it as a warm interchange between two people who have been through much in life together. Now at this uncertain hour, a dark hour for both, Jesus reaches out to the disciple who is there by Jesus' previous prediction. Or was he there by agreement or command? The word "friend" connotes comradeship and in Hebrew or Aramaic was probably "chaber." In this context it can only connote closeness of relationship.

A first-century drinking beaker: New light on this difficult text comes through the discovery of the words Jesus said ("You are here for this") used as a drinking slogan on a first-century drinking cup (see photo at left). This priceless artifact has forced us to remove every scent of satire or sarcasm from this saying of Jesus. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this saying—for given the way Judas was treated after Pentecost, no Christian disciple would have had a reason to invent this interchange.

But even more, the words "you are here for this" were used in classical Greek literature to debate the reason for human existence. Closer to home these words have been discovered embossed on numerous drinking vessels from the area of Tyre and Sidon. Several such goblets can be viewed today in the Toledo (Ohio) Art Gallery.

Around 1920, the famous New Testament philologist Adolf Deissmann identified a drinking vessel with those words and noted the relation to the word of Jesus. He urged scholars to pay heed to this "homely" bit of evidence, and over the years some have. But they have

Is it possible Jesus, by using this call to drink in celebration of companionship, is inviting Judas to come and drink the cup of death in friendship with him?

always been unable to create a bridge because there is such a strong hatred against Judas in the church and among scholars.

This past year, however, Frederick W. Danker has published his revision of the classic Greek-English dictionary by Walter Bauer. He notes that scholars and translators have tended to translate the Greek word describing what Judas did with "betray." They don't use that word to describe anyone else's action when the same Greek word is used. For example, it is translated "handed [him] over" (Matthew 27:2), "gave [him] up" (Romans 8:32) and "gave [himself]" (Galatians 2:20).

Consistent also with his findings on the meaning of the word in classical Greek, Danker now is reluctant to use the word betray to describe Judas' action or to call him a traitor. Once we start thinking in those terms, it makes it possible to interpret the words of Jesus to Judas in a straightforward way.

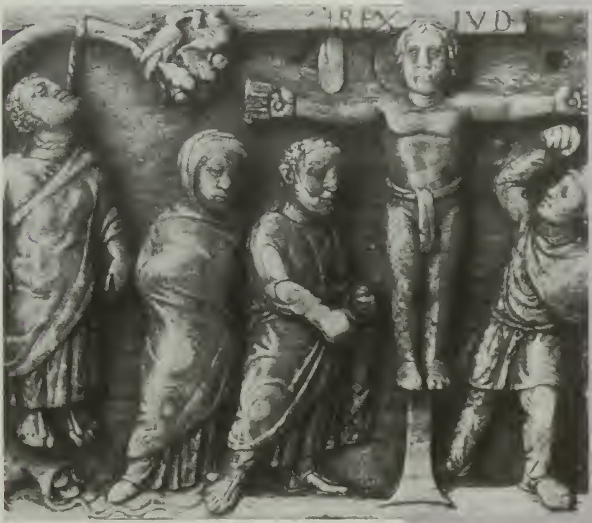
Then we ask, Is it possible Jesus, by using this call to drink in celebration of companionship, is inviting Judas to come and drink the cup of death in friendship with him? That fits with the fact that Jesus on previous occasions has spoken to the disciples about his need to drink the cup (Mark 10:39) and has wondered if they would be able to share it with him: "Are you able to drink the cup which I am about to drink?" (Mark 10:38; Matthew 20:22; cf. John 18:11). Now, having decided himself to drink it (Mark 14:36; Matthew 26:39; Luke 22:42), he invites his disciple Judas to join in drinking the cup of suffering with him.

Is it possible he does so by citing a drinking slogan well-known to Judas as well as to all the disciples? There is certainly other evidence Jesus drank generously with his disciples (Matthew 11:19; Luke 7:34), so the slogan may have been known to them. He reminded them at the Last Supper that this was the last time they would drink together until they all gathered at the heavenly banquet. In that last supper he said to them, "Drink from it, all of you" (Matthew 26:27).

The cup of death: Judas was not any more open to accepting this invitation than were the other disciples. He did not go with Jesus to the high priest and die with him. Soon after, when it became clear to him that the high priest had no intention of hearing Jesus—instead he "handed him over to Pilate"—Judas, unable to get the high priest to reverse his action, became depressed and ended his life in pain and sorrow. He drank the cup of death, but not in comradeship with Jesus.

Throughout the history of the church, voices have been raised to stand up for Judas. None perhaps more bravely than the artist who carved a cover of a casket of ivory (see below) in the third or fourth century. Described by one art historian as the earliest depiction of Christ on the cross, it is unique in that it has Judas hanging from a tree to the right hand of Jesus, who dies as King of the Jews. In this context of Jesus being proclaimed king, Judas is at his right hand. Even more remarkable, it is out of the dove's nest above the head of Judas that the symbol of hope shines forth: The mother dove is feeding her young. The artist may be signaling, Don't neglect Judas as one out of whose wounded life springs forth hope. Perhaps this artist also had seen the significance of that word of Jesus as he met Judas in the darkest hour of each of their lives, when he greeted him with a warm kiss and the words, "Friend, you are here for this."

William Klassen is author of Judas: Betrayer or Friend of Jesus? *(Fortress, 1996). His article "The Message of a First-Century Drinking Beaker" will appear in the book* Jesus and the Archaeological Remains of the First Century, *edited by James Charlesworth (Eerdmans).*



A wounded life: A third- or fourth-century ivory carving, from the British Museum, described by one art historian as the oldest representation of Jesus on the cross (Judas is at left)

Courtesy photo

Resurrection hope in Jerusalem

How can we confess the resurrection of the dead amid such pervasive evidence of the brokenness of human bodies, both individual and corporate?

by Alain Epp Weaver

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain.—1 Corinthians 15:12-14, NRSV

Jerusalem sorely tests my faith in the resurrection of the dead. Jerusalem, the city of the resurrection, is a city of broken bodies. Living amid such brokenness, I begin to doubt God's ability to bring wounded bodies back to life.

Human bodies, political bodies, ecclesial (church) bodies are all marked by brokenness. The integrity of individual human bodies has been violated: a nephew of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) employee in Jerusalem who lost an eye to an Israeli sniper while praying at the Haram al-Sharif (Noble Sanctuary) is but one story of bodily woundedness amid thousands of Palestinians damaged by Israeli bullets. Hundreds more Palestinians and scores of Israelis have died because of their killers' captivity to the lie that violence can bring security or liberation.

Rather than serving as a light to the nations, a city in which all children of God might live together according to justice and equality, Jerusalem instead testifies to the brokenness of human political relations.

The body politic is also fragmented. Despite Israeli claims that Jerusalem is a unified city under Israel's sovereign control, Jerusalem is in fact a divided city. Discriminatory building policies have created an apartheid reality in which Palestinian neighborhoods in Jerusalem are cut off from the rest of the occupied territories, encircled by Israeli settlements and denied all avenues for natural growth. Rather than serving as a light to the nations, a city in which all children of God might live together according to justice and equality, Jerusalem instead testifies to the brokenness of human political relations.

Church divisions: Outside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher

Holy Sepulcher: The woundedness of Christ's body, the church, is also painfully evident in Jerusalem, particularly at the Church of Holy Sepulcher, the site of Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection. Most Mennonite pilgrims to Palestine have a visceral reaction against the Holy Sepulcher. The icons and ornamentation appear jarring and foreign to our plainer aesthetic sensibilities. Even more discomforting are the church divisions and conflicts on display: a burnt-out chapel the Syrian Orthodox refuse to repair until the Armenian Orthodox admit having set the blaze; an ongoing dispute between the Coptic and Ethiopian Orthodox over one of the church's chapels; a history of priests engaging in hand-to-hand battle over who has the right to clean a particular lintel or step; the opening of the church every morning by two Muslim families so that no ecclesial body has possession of the keys. These all testify to the brokenness of the church body. It is ironic that Mennonites, spiritual descendants of Anabaptists, whom the rest of Christendom viewed as schismatics tearing apart Christ's body, are discomforted by these conflicts in the Holy Sepulcher. Yet Mennonites are not alone in lamenting the continuing brokenness

By disciplining ourselves to confess and proclaim the resurrection of the body, we can come to see the ways God is already working to transform our bodily brokenness.

of Christ's body at the site of Jesus' resurrection. It is a lament echoed across the ecumenical spectrum.

How can we confess the resurrection of the dead amid such pervasive evidence of the brokenness of human bodies, both individual and corporate? Jerusalem's brokenness is not unique; it can be taken as representative of the pervasive brokenness of all human, corporate bodies, even after Christ's resurrection. Every church, every city, is torn apart by divisions—some subtle, some painfully out in the open. Dare we have faith that our wounded ecclesial and political bodies can be and are restored in and through Jesus Christ?

The immediate and—for Christian faith—most dangerous temptation is to spiritualize the resurrection. Resurrection becomes an inward matter, disconnected from the messy, painful realities of human bodies. This turn inward is often played out on pilgrimages to Palestine or Israel. Confronted by Jerusalem's brokenness, many pilgrims, particularly Protestant ones, find solace in the Garden Tomb, an alternative site of the resurrection. While the Garden Tomb has a much weaker archaeological case for being the site of Jesus' entombment, its serene, English-garden setting gives pilgrims space to escape from Jerusalem's political, ecclesial brokenness. One should not begrudge pilgrims moments of quiet. However, the temptation posed by the Garden Tomb is to turn so inward that the resurrection becomes disconnected from not only our wounded human bodies but from our strife-torn political and ecclesial bodies as well.

Justice and equality: Because of this temptation, I find it a useful discipline to pray and reflect at the Holy Sepulcher, for there I am faced most starkly with the questions, Can God redeem our bodies, particularly our corporate, political, ecclesial bodies? Can the bodies of Palestinians permanently disabled by Israeli gunfire be restored? Can Jerusalem be transformed into a political body where Palestinians and Jews live together in justice and equality? Can God transform our broken, divided ecclesial bodies?

By disciplining ourselves to confess and proclaim the resurrection of the body, we can come to see the ways God is already working to transform our bodily brokenness. In Jerusalem, MCC is privileged to know and work with people who incarnate this resurrection hope: institutions such as the YMCA, which works to rehabilitate people injured in the "intifada" (the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation); Jews such as Jeff Halper and Palestinians such as Salim Shawamreh, who prophesy against Jerusalem's apartheid reality and work for justice in the city; church leaders such as Naim Ateek, Attallah Hanna and Michel Sabbah, who struggle to transcend the church's divisions and strengthen the witness of the Palestinian Christian churches.

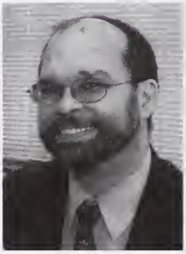
These witnesses are embodied signs that God can and does transform our messy, bodily reality. Surely God is working to transform our bodily brokenness not only in Jerusalem but in cities and churches around the world. May God grant us the sight to see and the faith to celebrate the resurrection of the body.

J. Daryl Byler

Embodied signs: Palestinian Christian leader Naim Ateek (left) with former Mennonite Central Committee country director Patty Shelly

Alain Epp Weaver and Sonia, his wife, are country co-representatives for Mennonite Central Committee in Palestine. They have two children, Samuel Rafiq and Katherine Noor.

MBM president appointed executive director of new Mennonite Church USA mission agency



It's going to be a particular challenge to gather the separate stories that we are inheriting and make them one common story.

—Stanley Green

NEWTON, Kan.—Herman Bontrager knows one thing that gets Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) president Stanley Green's juices flowing.

"Stanley gets excited and lights up when he talks about an organic mission system where the congregation is the locus of mission," says Bontrager, a longtime MBM board member.

Empowering the grassroots is part of the "missional church" concept, which has become a key principle for Mennonite Church USA. And Green, MBM president since 1993, will be in a prime position to continue nurturing that idea. He was announced March 30 as executive director of the new denomination's mission agency, which will replace MBM, the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM).

Green was approved by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board via email on March 29 and the next day by the MBM, CHM and COM boards, which were meeting jointly in Newton. Both actions had no dissenting votes. Green will start a four-year term on May 1, becoming the first permanent head of a new Mennonite Church USA program agency. Dennis Good was named last month as interim publisher of Mennonite Publishing House Inc.

"With God's help, I commit myself to do my best, and I commit to God the career of mission by Mennonites in the 21st century; for I believe that is, after all, God's mission," Green said.

Green was among three finalists interviewed by the search committee, chosen from some 45 candidates. Bontrager, chair of the search committee, cited Green's experience in international and urban mission work, administration, fund raising and communication, plus his knowledge of Anabaptist missiology.

Then there are the joint efforts MBM has developed with congregations during Green's tenure. The agency has eight partnerships with congregations or groups of congregations supporting specific mission projects. "That has shown the congregations that the agency does what it can to serve and enable [them]," Bontrager said.

But Green will have to increase his familiarity with the General Conference Mennonite Church. "Stanley realizes that … he is not widely known to General Conference people, and he is going to be urged to spend substantial time talking to GC congregations," said Tom Lehman, chair of COM and of the joint MBM-CHM-COM executive committee.

Said Green, "It's going to be a particular challenge to gather the separate stories that we are inheriting and make them one common story."

In order to distance himself from his current agency for the transition, Green will move out of the MBM offices in Elkhart to an undetermined site when he starts his new position. "The new leader needs to create space for all people and all parts as three [agencies] become one," Bontrager said.

The new mission agency is scheduled to begin in February 2002. Delegates to this summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn., are expected to take action on the creation of a single board to oversee the three existing agencies until they cease operation. COM executive secretary Ron Flaming will then become director of international programs for Mennonite Central Committee, while CHM executive secretary Lois Barrett's plans are yet to be determined. Marty Lehman, MBM vice president for operations, was named to succeed Green as MBM's interim president.

Green is from South Africa, where he was raised in the Congregational Church and later pastored several congregations. He and his family also served in Jamaica from 1981 to 1985 with the United Church of Jamaica and Grand Cayman.

Green began studies at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., in 1986 and became active in the Mennonite Church. He served as an area conference minister for Southwest Conference, an MBM urban missiologist, president of the Council for Anabaptists in Los Angeles and pastor of Faith Mennonite Church in Downey, Calif.

While at MBM, Green initiated a comprehensive study of the board's programs, resulting in new emphases on connections with congregations and conferences, increased short-term mission opportunities and linking social action and evangelism.

"Even in taking MBM through these significant organizational changes and focus," said Bontrager, "he led a team that was effective in keeping the support strong and growing for MBM."*—Rich Preheim with Tom Price*

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

". . . to prepare pastors"

More than one half of the graduates of AMBS from 1997-1999 are serving as congregational pastors and another third are serving the church in other forms of ministry. In the mission statement of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary the first thing we say is, "AMBS seeks ***to prepare pastors,*** *missionaries, teachers, evangelists and other church leaders...."*

In this issue of AMBS Window *we invited four members of the AMBS faculty to reflect on what they do to prepare people to be pastors, and we asked recent graduates to tell us what they found most helpful.*

How do we know God exists?

Karl Koop
Assistant Professor of Theology and Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies

"How do we know God exists if we can't see him?" asked my six-year-old the other day. "Why did Jesus have to die?" inquired my eight-year-old at Easter time last year.

Questions about God, faith and the world are abundant among young and old alike. Sometimes the basic questions are the most difficult to answer. This has been my experience as a parent. It was also what I encountered as a pastor among immigrants of the former Soviet Union, in eastern Germany in the mid-1990s. Many of these immigrants had gone through a great deal of tragedy and suffering. Some questioned God's faithfulness and even God's existence. Their questions were simply put, yet highly complex and difficult to answer.

Perhaps the basic questions of faith are the ones that should be given our most serious attention. In an increasingly complex world of multiple authorities and competing loyalties, the need for the church to speak with integrity concerning its most central convictions is urgent. Persons in church leadership positions, who are involved in proclamation, pastoral care and Christian witness, cannot avoid addressing the foundational questions that people are asking.

I teach a course called systematic theology. Some students come to the class with a great deal of apprehension. They assume that the course is highly philosophical, and therefore will bypass "real life issues." Many students are surprised to discover that systematic theology at AMBS is primarily an examination of central Christian convictions. We focus on the foundations and basic assumptions of Christian belief, and examine classical and contemporary understandings of God, revelation, creation, humankind, sin and evil, Jesus Christ and salvation. These perspectives are addressed from an Anabaptist-Mennonite point of view in conversation with other theological traditions.

Theology's proper task is to serve the church with humility and help it live faithfully in a particular time and place. It should clarify as far as is possible the ways in which faith is to be practiced, and should motivate the people of God to live in accordance with their commitments. In this respect systematic theology has much to do with "real life issues."

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Important preparation came through my advisers and Ministry groups, who shared God's grace with me in significant ways. The encouragement I was given built my self-confidence out of a pile of uncertainties. I was gently pushed to walk into new territory and expand my experience of God in areas I hadn't considered.

Greg Yantzi, Pastor, Harrow (Ont.) Mennonite Church

Greek and prayer

Mary H. Schertz
Professor of New Testament

"Everybody knows" that studying Greek and Hebrew is for "intellectuals," those who have nothing better to do than sit all day pondering the meaning of a single, obscure word. There just isn't time for pastors actually to use the biblical languages "on the job."

As is often the case, what "everybody knows" is dubitable. I don't want to minimize the time and discipline it takes to learn and maintain languages. Nor do I want to minimize the role of Bible study in understanding and intellectual discernment. But prayer also takes time and discipline. It also increases understanding and discernment. Like prayer, biblical languages are a category of spiritual discipline and transformation that I covet for all those who are becoming pastors.

Like prayer, Greek pares us down and builds us up. It strips away our false confidence, our over-familiarity with the text, our assumption that we already know pretty much what the Bible says and that it pretty much agrees with our denominational culture. As I teach Greek verbs and participles, I am also looking for that disturbing and delightful "aha" moment when students realize the distance between the translations they've read all their lives and "what it really says." I am looking for that moment of holy awe when students truly see that our knowledge of God's love and hope for humanity has been transmitted to us in strange and foreign squiggles—and that it is a miracle.

Also like prayer, Greek builds honest confidence. The ability to read the Bible for ourselves, to use commentaries intelligently but not be at their mercy is a powerful gift. There is nothing else that can so solidly ground a ministry of the Word. Pastors who study and use the biblical languages have a proper and chastened authority in their teaching and preaching that emerges out of their spiritual discipline. This is what I want pastors, and their congregations, to gain from studying Greek and Hebrew.

"I am going to be a pastor"

Erick Sawatzky
Director of Field Education; Associate Professor of Pastoral Ministry

"I am going to be a pastor," she said as she bounced into my office. Mary (not her real name) had come to seminary thinking she would be a teacher because people in her conference did not accept women in the pulpit.

Now everything was different. God had other ideas. Amid the strangest of arrangements and circumstances God worked a miracle. God called Mary to pastoral ministry.

What was she to do? The inner call was there. Her church was elsewhere. Then it happened! Another group of believers opened its doors and allowed Mary to experience pastoral ministry as a pastoral intern. Mary would visit the sick, lead worship, serve communion, teach and preach, and do all the things pastors do—and all for school credit.

Knowledgeable and caring professors and staff, as well as a well-thought through curriculum with a strong biblical base and a realistic view of ministry were foundational in my preparation for ministry. Perhaps most important was the atmosphere of nurture which allowed me to feel affirmed in my call to ministry.

Todd Schlosser
Associate Pastor
Bergthaler Mennonite
Church of Morden,
Manitoba

Mary threw herself into her pastoral assignment. She experienced the agony and the ecstasy of pastoral ministry as an intern, under the supervision of an experienced pastor. Then one day it was sealed—her supervising pastor asked her to preach. Mary had never viewed herself as a preacher. But it felt right. God must be doing God's thing through this experiential, intern experience. "I am going to be a pastor," she said.

Year after year it happens. Students fall in love with the church; students win the hearts of congregations; students' calls are clarified; students decide to accept the call to pastoral ministry.

Not all knowledge or every kind of knowledge is learned in the classroom and in the library. Learning to ride a bicycle or to paddle a canoe must be learned by experience.

How does one learn to be a pastor? Some aspects are learned from a teacher and a book. Other aspects of pastoral ministry are learned only by experience.

At AMBS we take all aspects of learning, including experience, seriously. Learning is complicated business. Congregations are complex. That's why we require students in the Master of Divinity program to do internships. It keeps students honest and it brings honesty to the congregation.

In many ways the greatest gift AMBS gave to me was space to "see" my inner call, space to experience God's movement in my life, and the tools to attend to these parts of myself as pastor and person. The nurturing community at AMBS gave me a sense of security but also encouraged me to develop my sense of inner call to pastoral ministry. Silent prayer retreats instilled in me the commitment to care for myself intentionally through prayer and reflection. The discipline of working with a spiritual director helped me attend to the many ways God is present and active in my life. The academic work I did at AMBS was essential to my preparation as a pastor, but the interior spiritual work I did was key to my willingness to enter pastoral ministry.

Tonya Ramer Wenger, Pastor, Madison (Wisc.) Mennonite Church

How can you speak if you have not heard?

June Alliman Yoder
Associate Professor of Communication and Preaching

Preaching is a complex activity integrating almost all of the different disciplines taught at seminary. My bookshelf has titles on preaching from the Old Testament, preaching from the New Testament, preaching theology and the theology of preaching, the history of preaching, preaching peace and justice, preaching God and the natural world, preaching and pastoral care, preaching for the local congregation, preaching for the baptized, and preaching as performance. Then there are books covering expository preaching, evangelistic preaching, narrative preaching, Biblical preaching, topical preaching and the teaching sermon. Then come the books about the preacher—the calling of the preacher, the preacher as scholar, the preacher as poet, the preacher as faithful shepherd, the preacher and family. Where does one possibly begin and end in the teaching of preaching?

Needless to say there is more to teach than any course can contain so I have to make choices. The following are some of the most significant things that I try to teach students in preparation for their preaching ministry.

1. The foundational steps for putting a sermon together. Sermons are different from speeches on religious topics and students are eager to learn how to conceptualize and prepare a sermon so they can effectively communicate God's Word to their congregations.

2. The importance of bridging the chasm between the world of the text and the world of the listeners. The preacher must learn to take a passage of Scripture that seems at first reading "dusty and long ago" and breathe new life into it so the contemporary listener can hear it.

3. The principles of effective public address. I count on my colleagues in Bible, theology, worship, pastoral care, and most all the courses in the AMBS curriculum to teach the material that may become the content of the sermon. My focus is to teach the sermonic forms and oral communication in the worship context. Delivery is an important focus in the teaching of preaching at AMBS.

4. Principles of self-evaluation. I am as aware as the students are that one does not become an accomplished preacher in a semester or two. Therefore, I consider it important to give students experience and skills in evaluating their own preaching so they can continue to improve as preachers over the years.

5. Listening to God. I am convinced that preachers who do not listen to God have nothing to say. More than anything else I want my students to realize that without a living relationship with God, where they listen lots more than they talk, they do not have what it takes to speak God's Word or interpret God's Word. Preaching is first of all a listening event.

AMBS has served as the cultivator of my ministry. I came to the seminary in 1995 with clear purpose and firm commitment to learn and experience as much as possible in preparation for pastoring. I brought with me the fallow field of my vocational life and call. AMBS tilled and harrowed and hoed and planted. I learned to think theologically and worship well. I developed skills to delve into the Bible. I gained pastoral experience in my internship and intellectual experience in classroom pursuits. I received blessing from the gifts of faculty and staff.

Now the seeds sown at AMBS are growing in ministry. Of course, tares remain (they're stubborn!), but AMBS continues to work my field through events like "Clarifying the Call" and Pastors' Week. I am grateful for the continuing cultivation of AMBS.

Anita Yoder Kehr
Associate Pastor
Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship,
Goshen, Ind.

What we learned from the graduating student survey

Loren L. Johns, AMBS dean

Last year for the first time, AMBS gave graduates a standard survey from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) in order to help measure their satisfaction with their seminary experience. We learned:

❶ We compare well with other ATS schools in students' reports about their satisfaction with skills gained at seminary. Of the fifteen ministry-related skills, the five that received the highest marks from AMBS graduates were:
- ability to conduct worship;
- ability to think theologically;
- ability to use and interpret Scripture;
- ability to relate social issues to faith; and
- knowledge of my own religious tradition. Overall, our graduates rated higher satisfaction than their peers in nine of the fifteen categories of skills.

❷ More than 94 percent of AMBS students rated their field education/internship experience as "important" or "very important" to them, primarily for its help in improving pastoral skills and providing greater vocational clarity. This is compared with 82.3 percent of their peers who rated their field experience this highly.

❸ Our graduates were overwhelmingly pleased with their experience at AMBS. In a list of fourteen statements to explore their satisfaction with their seminary experience, the top two choices among our students were:
- If I had to do it over again, I would still come here.
- I have been satisfied with my academic experience here.

❹ When asked to rate their growth on fourteen different measures, the graduates gave the highest marks to:
- clarity of vocational goals;
- self-knowledge/self-confidence; and
- enthusiasm for learning. Overall, our graduates rated their growth more strongly than in peer schools in two areas: clarity of vocational goals and enthusiasm for learning.

❺ Our graduates depend somewhat more on savings and AMBS scholarships and grants to pay for their schooling than the norm group. Two-thirds of our M.Div. graduates and three-fourths of our M.A. graduates incurred no new debt at AMBS! This speaks well of the generosity of AMBS donors in making AMBS study affordable.

❻ Finally, we learned that we have room for improvement. The results of this survey suggest that we might want to work in the following areas:
- attract more single students in their twenties;
- attract a more racially and ethnically diverse student body; and
- provide more training in others' religious traditions.

The results of the survey also suggest that we ought to seek more information to find out why so few of our female students show interest in further graduate study.

At the same time, the results suggest that we should get word out about how well we are doing in the following areas:

1. attracting Canadian and international students;
2. providing valued chapel/campus worship experiences;
3. providing an effective, valued field education experience;
4. providing most of our students with significant vocational clarity;
5. providing our students with significant levels of satisfaction with their progress in ministry-related skills, such as preaching, interpreting Scripture, teaching, worship, and the ability to think theologically;
6. providing an affordable seminary education without saddling our graduates with significant educational debt;
7. providing such a positive educational opportunity that the single most-repeated characterization of our students' experience was, **"If I had to do it over again, I would still come here."**

Former U.S. Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill used to say, "All politics is local." One could add, "All politics is process." I know this to be very true based on five years of pastoring. I also know that I experienced this when I was at AMBS. From the time we entered the seminary 'til we finished, all those in the pastoral ministry track went through process. Sometimes it seemed redundant; sometimes it seemed irrelevant; now I see how it helped to shape me as a pastor.

The most helpful, and the most difficult, were the pastoral ministry groups. There was an emphasis on small group process. We worked on personal relationships within the group as well as outside. When I couldn't see the end I would get impatient and frustrated. Yet, as the professor guided our sessions, I came to see the value of "process." It was exciting and humbling. What good lessons!

Doug Amstutz
Co-Pastor, Mennonite
Church of Scottdale,
Pennsylvania

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: J. Tyler Klassen
Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Canadian Mennonite and The Mennonite.

Spring 2001

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Albania work connects three continents

Brazilian answers mission call through Virginia board

ELKHART, Ind.—The theory of continental drift says that all the earth's continents were at one time joined together in one giant landmass that split apart over time. Now eons later, Norma Teles is bringing South America, North America and Europe back together.

Teles is a Brazilian Mennonite mission worker in partnership with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) serving in Albania.

"Everything about the Christian message is new in Albania," she said during a recent visit to Mennonite Board of Missions headquarters in Elkhart. "Peace, grace and forgiveness are all difficult concepts. The Communist slogan was, 'Live, die and kill for your country.' This reinforced the centuries-old Albanian concept of blood revenge between families. ... The gospel of peace is good news in Albania."

Teles discovered Albania in 1994 when she participated in a Youth With a Mission (YWAM) ministry there. She is now sponsored by the Brazilian Mennonite International Mennonite Mission Board (JMMI), which has seconded her to VMBM.

YWAM was forced out of Albania due to political tensions in 1997. Teles returned to Brazil and took up a previous ministry to street children under YWAM. But Albania continued to tug at her heart. After two years, Teles talked to her pastor of Lagoa Encantada, a Mennonite congregation in Recife planted by Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions workers. Teles' pastor encouraged her to make Mennonite connections and to go back to Albania as a mission worker sent by the Brazilian Mennonites.

Teles knew that there were Mennonites working in Albania, and she wrote to VMBM. Willard Eberly, Mediterranean regional director, responded to Teles' letter by asking if the Brazil Mennonite Church had a mission board that could sponsor her.

"God's timing is truly amazing," Teles said. "In April, when I wrote the letter, the Brazil Mennonite Church didn't have a mission board. But by the time I wrote back to Eberly in July, there was."

Thirty-one Mennonite congregations throughout Brazil make up JMMI's constituency. In addition to Teles, the Brazilian mission agency has supported João, Rosa and Keren de Brito in Mozambique since 1999.

In Albania, Teles works with children and youth in Lezhë Mennonite Church, a congregation of 25 to 30 people. She helps organize vacation Bible schools, summer camps, afterschool clubs and English and computer classes.

MBM photo by John D. Yoder

Norma Teles, a Brazilian Mennonite working with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions in Albania, speaks to an audience at Mennonite Board of Missions headquarters in Elkhart, Ind. She is currently visiting North America.

"At first, many parents, even the Muslims, who represent 70 percent of the country's population, encouraged their children to attend church activities because there weren't other fun possibilities," Teles said. "However, when the kids decided they wanted to follow Jesus, their parents would pull them away from the church."

Mennonites first entered Albania with food and clothing relief in 1993, two years after the demise of the Communist regime. A nucleus of a church was formed in 1994 but didn't grow due to the flood of emigration.

In order to provide an income-generating alternative to emigration, Mennonites began to promote the construction of greenhouses in Lushnja, where tomatoes, lettuce, cauliflower and carrots can be grown. Lushnja is a smaller town about three hours from Lezhë, where the second of two Albanian Mennonite congregations is located.

"Albanian men don't like to come to church, but since they have begun working with the greenhouses, the church is full of men," Teles said. "It is wonderful."

This is Teles's first visit to North America. "I'm happy to be able to visit my co-workers' families and see so much space for each family," she said. "In Lezhë, like in Brazil, people live on top of each other. I needed this experience to help me understand [the American desire for privacy]."

Following her North American visit, Teles will spend three months in Brazil before returning to Albania for another year.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

> **Everything about the Christian message is new in Albania. Peace, grace and forgiveness are all difficult concepts.**
>
> *—Norma Teles*

Lancaster women celebrate signs of hope

Speakers want to encourage others to enter ministry

LANCASTER, Pa.—Most of the women who are now or have been involved in leadership in Lancaster Conference—one of the last places in the Mennonite church that does not credential women to be lead pastors—would agree it is not the most hospitable environment for exercising their gifts. Yet they would also say there is reason for hope.

One of those reasons is *Quiet Shouts.* A book by that name, subtitled *Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders,* was published by Herald Press in 1999. In addition, Quiet Shouts is the name given to a scholarship fund created to encourage Lancaster women pursuing a seminary education (see story below).

On March 13, Lancaster's Women in Leadership Subcommittee invited *Quiet Shouts* author Louise Stoltzfus and the eight women featured in the book who are still living to a reception at the Lancaster Mennonite Conference Center. Six women were able to attend.

Following the reception, the women made their way to nearby Lancaster Mennonite High School for one of the periodic dinner meetings of the "business and professional women" members of Lancaster's Mennonite Women chapter. Four of the *Quiet Shouts* women were part of an after-dinner panel.

"The women [on the panel] this evening have particular callings and gifts as leaders," said Stoltzfus, who moderated the discussion. "They are only four of many women whose stories we discover when we examine the richly textured threads of Lancaster Mennonite history."

Then she asked the women what they thought when they were invited to tell their stories for *Quiet Shouts.*

I'm hoping that it will be easier for younger women, like my granddaughters, to be in ministry than it was for me.

—*Jean Kraybill Shenk*

Melanie Zuercher

Elizabeth Landis Nissley speaks during a March 13 discussion on women in ministry while fellow panel members (left to right) Mim Book, Lena Horning Brown and Jean Kraybill Shenk look on.

"I was honored and pleased," said Elizabeth (Libby) Landis Nissley, who served seven years on the pastoral team at Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church and is now a full-time student at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va. "Then I wondered, 'What do I have to say? Is it safe?' I decided I'm 55 and I don't have a lot to lose. It's time to mentor others as I have been mentored."

"I believe, like Libby, that our stories must—they should—be told," added Mim Book, who grew up in Lancaster Conference, served as Mennonite Church associate general secretary and is now associate pastor at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville. "There was also fear. There's risk in being honest; once [what you say] is written and circulated, it can both encourage and discourage future leadership. And I had to pay attention to my own journey and my own disappointment when I had felt called to ministry and the door was closed."

Lena Horning Brown, the first deaconess to be licensed by Lancaster and now an interim pastor in her congregation, Slate Hill Mennonite Church in Camp Hill, Pa., said: "I've been told that when I was a small child, my father took me with him to Pottstown to market, and that I climbed up into the showroom of a store and sat there in the front window. That was how I felt about *Quiet Shouts.* But I wanted to help other women speak."

Jean Kraybill Shenk, a volunteer chaplain at two Lancaster hospitals, added, "I'm hoping that it will be easier for younger women, like my granddaughters, to be in ministry than it was for me."—*Melanie Zuercher*

Supporters put money where their mouth is

LANCASTER, Pa.—For Lancaster Conference women in church leadership and for those who feel called to leadership, *Quiet Shouts* keeps echoing.

Louise Stoltzfus, author of the book about Lancaster women leaders, was so inspired by her subjects that she is donating her royalties to a seminary scholarship fund for women. The royalties have been modest but enough to start the Quiet Shouts Seminary Scholarship Fund. The first three scholarships were awarded last fall.

Lancaster's Women in Leadership Subcommittee administers the fund, which has $11,000.— *Melanie Zuercher*

Dale D. Gehman

Quiz confab

Gary Steiner, coach of the Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church quiz team, talks strategy with team members (left to right) Joni Linee Swartzentruber, Holly Swartzentruber, Megan Sohar and Jared Yoder during a quiz tournament March 24-25 in West Liberty, Ohio. Orrville finished third among 76 Mennonite and non-Mennonite teams from Ohio and Pennsylvania.

MCC dry latrine project surges forward in Bolivia

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia—Ten years after Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) introduced dry latrines to Bolivia's rainy rural zones, demand for them is snowballing.

Dry latrines are cleaner and safer alternatives to conventional pit latrines in rainy zones and areas with high water tables. A specially designed concrete seat separates the urine from the hazardous feces. The harmless urine is allowed to filter through the ground while the feces are kept in a watertight compartment above ground. The waste is flushed with a handful of dry dirt or ashes to combat parasites and disease. After six months, the feces are harmless and can be used for fertilizer.

The latrines' growth started two years ago when Bolivia's rural sanitation ministry contracted with MCC to produce 385 latrines for four communities north of Santa Cruz. The number of dry latrines is now reaching into the thousands.

MCC recently handed over the manufacture of the latrine components to several local families who fabricate the concrete parts on unused space on MCC property south of Santa Cruz. MCC continues to serve as a consultant in the project.—*Stanley Reed for MCC News Service*

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this date in Mennonite history

April 10, 1947—Representatives from Mennonite Central Committee and the Church of the Brethren appear before a presidential commission to argue for peacetime draft provisions for conscientious objectors to war.

MVS associate director moving to MCC

NEWTON, Kan.—Saul Murcia, associate director for Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS), has announced his resignation, effective July 20, to accept a position with Mennonite Central Committee. He will become co-director of programs in Latin America and the Caribbean, based in MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa.

Murcia has worked with MVS from an office in Austin, Texas, since 1988. He has oversight of 11 MVS units across the United States.—*GCMC News Service*

John McCain named to school foundation post

NEWTON, Kan.—John McCain may have been denied in his bid for the White House. But the former presidential hopeful and Arizona's senior senator has found another job.

McCain has agreed to serve as honorary chair of the Hopi Mission School Foundation. The foundation, which had its organizing meeting March 10 in Glendale, Ariz., will collect money for an endowment for the school in Kykotsomovi.

The school, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, is on the Hopi reservation in northeastern Arizona and is supported by the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) through its Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (MILC) and by the American Baptist Churches. Most of the school's teachers are Mennonite Voluntary Service workers.

One of McCain's aides, Deborah Baker, is a Hopi Mission School graduate and has a son attending there.

The foundation was created in response to a decision by CHM and MILC to decrease their subsidy of the school over a 10-year period starting in 1994.—*GCMC News Service*

Evangelism portfolio shifts from MBCM to MBM

ELKHART, Ind.—Responsibility for evangelism in the Mennonite Church has been transferred from Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) to Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

The move comes as part of the agency restructuring for the creation of Mennonite Church USA. MBCM will cease operation next year, with its responsibilities allocated elsewhere. The evangelism portfolio will be part of MBM's Evangelism and Church Development (ECD) department, although MBCM will continue to provide funding for the interim period.

"Mission and evangelism belong together," says ECD director John Powell. "[Their union] speaks to who Christ is and what the church is about."—*MBM News Service*

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Workers

Boshart, Shana Peachey, has been named conference youth minister for Central Plains Conference. She had been youth minister for Iowa-Nebraska Conference.

Kauffman, Ed, will begin Aug. 1 as conference minister for Central Plains Conference. He is currently pastor of Beatrice (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Ramseyer, Alice Ruth and Robert, Bluffton, Ohio, will work part-time for the development office of the General Conference Mennonite Church, visiting congregations and individuals in the eastern part of the United States.

Births

Armstrong, Anna Maria, April 17, 1998, received for adoption March 5, 2001, by Rita (Riemenschneider) and Robert Armstrong, Olney Springs, Colo.

Fogarty-Harnish, Magdelena Isabel, March 20, to David and Peggy Fogarty-Harnish, Ephrata, Pa.

Funk, Owen Lee, March 14, to Barry and Caren (Rice) Funk, Reedley, Calif.

Graham, Jackson Michael, Jan. 17, to Cheryl (Oyer) and Jim Graham, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Harbison, Wyatt Ray, Feb. 15, to Jeremy and Julie (Miller) Harbison, Brighton, Iowa.

Holsopple, Sydney Anne, March 17, to Richard and Shelby (Moyer) Holsopple, Boswell, Pa.

Litwiller, Grace Marie, March 14, to Chris (Wyse) and Jeff Litwiller, Mackinaw, Ill.

McQuade, Kathryn Jessica, March 7, to Jessica (Gehman) and John McQuade, Hatfield, Pa.

Neer, Courtney Lynn, Feb. 24, to Steve and Surena (Evans) Neer, West Liberty, Ohio.

Nelke, Isabelle Rose, Feb. 13, to Christopher and Cynthia (Watkins) Nelke, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Oven, Gracie Rae, March 19, to Gerald and Robin (Troyer) Oven, Engadine, Mich.

Schmucker, Rachel Elise, March 14, to Kristine (Miller) and Wesley Schmucker, Millersburg, Ohio.

Siebert, Sydney Ann, March 12, to Leo and Susan (Woods) Siebert, McCool Junction, Neb.

Ulrich, Grace Marie, March 7, to Jane (Weber) and Jeff Ulrich, Secor, Ill.

Weadick, Kaitlyn Joy, March 21, to Darlene (Shenk) and Mike Weadick, Goshen, Ind.

Zercher, Samuel Aaron Weaver, Feb. 21, to David and Valerie Weaver-Zercher, Harrisburg, Pa.

Marriages

Brenneman/Zaerr: Douglas Brenneman, Parnell, Iowa, and Diane Zaerr, Elkhart, Ind., March 10 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Nussbaum/Stapleton: Sonia Nussbaum, Kidron, Ohio, and Christopher Stapleton, Chandler, N.C., March 2 at Chandler.

Deaths

Beiler, Irvin, 90, Morgantown, Pa., died March 14. Spouse: Alice Mast Beiler. Parents: Levi and Sarah Stoltzfus Beiler (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Elsie Mae Beiler Beiler; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 17 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown.

Bender, Rachel Gerber, 85, Tavistock, Ont., died March 10. Spouse: Ervin Bender (deceased). Parents: Michael and Veronica Gerber (deceased). Survivors: children Arthur, Janet Bachert, LaRoy, Ronald, Leon, Stuart, Mary Lou Holst, Linda Ferguson; 33 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Tavistock.

Breighner, Rudolph, 92, Millersville, Pa., died March 12. Spouse: (1st) Mary Sangrey Breighner (deceased); (2nd) Mary Keeports Breighner. Parents: Isaac and Clara Shultz Breighner (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Joyce Stekervetz; six grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 15 at Washington Boro, Pa.

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for more about MSEC schools, click on **www.MennoniteSchools.org** *with links to member schools*

Chaple, Alberto, 84, Hesston, Kan., died Feb. 21 of cancer. Spouse: Maria Ayala Chaple. Parents: Alberto Chaple and Maria Carmen Estevez (deceased). Other survivors: son Rene; one grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Hesston.

Eichelberger, Betty Johnston, 73, Wayland, Iowa, died March 11 of cancer. Spouse: Cal Eichelberger. Parents: Holly and Wilma Smid Johnston (deceased). Other survivors: children Dave, Don, Bruce, Joe, Jan; 14 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 14 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Friesen, Harold, 86, Henderson, Neb., died March 16. Spouse: Elda Pankratz Friesen. Parents: Abraham and Margaret Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Marlene Thieszen, Harold, Royce, Mary Buller; nine grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 19 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Hershberger, Marie Yoder, 91, Glendale, Ariz., died Feb. 28. Spouse: Sam Hershberger. Other survivors: son Donald; three grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 4 at Glendale.

Lauver, Glen, 75, Gap, Pa., died Jan. 26 of respiratory failure. Parents: William and Florence Lauver (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 30 at Leola, Pa.

Litwiller, Ruth Rensberger, 90, Kalona, Iowa, died March 14 of cancer. Spouse: Isaiah Litwiller. Parents: Ervin and Mamie Yoder Rensberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Stanley, Wilbur, Calvin; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 18 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Massanari, Christine Yoder, 84, Goshen, Ind., died March 9. Spouse: Karl Massanari. Parents: M. S. and Katie Fett Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Ron, Jared, Ken, Jeff; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 11 at Goshen.

Police, Anthony, 88, Dalton, Ohio, died March 7. Spouse: Esther Police (deceased). Parents: Louis and Sarah Police (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Creech, Rose Zook, Anthony Jr., John; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 12 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Raber, Rebecca Yoder, 81, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died March 12. Spouse: Joseph Raber (deceased) Parents: Mose and Lydiann Keim Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Mary Jo VanEpps, Betty Zimmerman; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 15 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Roeschley, Wilma, 77, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 26. Parents: Eli and Emma Beller Roeschley (deceased). Funeral: March 1 at Goshen.

Short, Joseph, 77, Wauseon, Ohio, died March 22. Spouse: Alice Short (deceased). Parents: Elmer and Jeanette Yoder Short (deceased). Survivors: children Duane, David, Mervin; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: March 24 at North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Slabaugh, Moses, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died March 14. Spouse: Mary Troyer Slabaugh. Parents: Moses and Lydia Schlabach (deceased). Other survivors: children Ellen Helmuth, Marvin, Gordon, Mary Joyce Christophel; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 17 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Yoder, Edythe Yoder Anderson, 78, West Liberty, Ohio, died March 17. Spouse: (1st) Tobe Anderson (deceased); (2nd) Philip Yoder (deceased). Parents: Nathaniel and Lizzie Miller Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth Anderson, Susan Weaver, Myron Yoder, Lowell Yoder, Ramona Yoder; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 21 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Yoder, John, 68, Allensville, Pa., died March 26. Spouse: Sara Anna Yoder Yoder. Parents: John Sr. and Edna Glick Yoder (deceased); stepmother: Naomi Yoder Yoder. Other survivors: children Edna Mae Maurer, Shamokin, Jennifer Filson; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 28 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Correction: Linwood Landis was incorrectly listed as Ainwood Landis under Deaths in the March 13 issue.

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- **North Leo Mennonite Church** (12 miles north of Fort Wayne, Ind.) seeks ***minister of music***, 8-10 hrs. per week. Immediate availability.

  Call 219-627-2149 or send resume to Box 213, Leo, IN 46765.

- **Mennonite poets**, please bring a collection of your ***poems to the Nashville convention***. Schleitheim Stage will feature Poetry Hour from 6-7 p.m. daily. We want to hear your voice.

  Refer questions to <jdanielhess@juno.com>.

- **Grace Mennonite Church**, Enid, Okla., is seeking a half-time ***student minister***.

  For further info call 580-234-2078 or <gracemen@21stcomm.com>.

- **Bahia Vista Mennonite Church *50th anniversary celebration*** April 20-22: The weekend of remembering will include sharing by former pastors, singing groups, meals, memorabilia and more.

  For more information call 941-377-4041.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***assistant principal, middle-school teacher, teacher aide***.

  For more information, contact Ib Thomsen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich., is accepting inquiries and resumes for two full-time positions: ***coordinator of outdoor education*** and ***coordinator of youth ministries***. Job descriptions are available.

  Contact Dana Sommers, 616-651-2811; <dana@amigocentre.org>. Deadline is April 20.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has a fall opening for a ***teaching position*** in the resource room. Special education/NILD certification preferred.

  Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.

  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.

  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/ development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.

  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for part-time ***middle-school English teacher*** (middle school or elementary cert. preferred). Come teach in warm supportive school community! More information on HMS at <http://www.hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

  Send resumes to Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email <tgb@hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

- **Raleigh Mennonite Church**, <http://rtpnet.org/~rmc>, Raleigh, N.C., a vibrant, urban congregation, invites applicants for two half-time positions: ***youth pastor*** and ***congregational peace center director***. Couples, minorities and women are especially encouraged to apply. Positions available this summer.

  Please send cover letter and resume indicating areas of interest to Raleigh Mennonite Church, Attn. Jon Friesen, P.O. Box 25545, Raleigh, NC 27611-5545; email <friesen@intrex.net>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for a full-time ***computer teacher/technology coordinator*** in a K-8 school of 360 students in the Akron/Canton area.

  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; email <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **Wanted:** part-time ***pastor*** for suburban Mennonite church in Knoxville, Tenn. Please contact overseer Ed Godshall, 704-462-1707.

- **Community Mennonite Early Learning Center** is looking for a ***financial director*** for a large childcare center in a south suburb of Chicago serving infants and preschool children of low-income families. A B.A. in accounting or related business degree with 2-3 years experience preferred. Would be responsible for the overall business management of the center, including payroll and working with state funding agencies.

  Send resume to Michael Devine, Community Mennonite Early Learning Center, 3215 W. 162nd St., Markham, IL 60426; fax 708-333-1248.

- **Eastern Mennonite University**, a private, Christian liberal arts institution located in Harrisonburg, Va., seeks applications for the position of ***head athletic trainer***. Responsible for the coordination and delivery of athletic training services to members of the NCAA Division III intercollegiate athletic program. The athletic trainer will work to support the mission statement of the university and mission of the athletic department by organizing and administering prevention, care and rehabilitation of athletes in the intercollegiate athletic program. Minimum requirements include (1) National Athletic Trainers Association Board of Certification, (2) bachelor's degree required, master's preferred, (3) CPR certification, (4) must be analytical, calm, organized and have good communication skills in a crisis situation, (5) must be flexible, creative and demonstrate problem-solving skills while performing athletic training duties. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Beginning date: Aug. 1, 2001.

  Send a letter of application, resume, response to application question, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three professional references to Anthony Resto Jr., Director of Human Resources, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4108; email <restoa@emu.edu>. Review of applications will begin April 18, 2001, and continue until the position is filled. Visit our web site for more information at <www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/athletictrainer.htm>. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. AAEO employer.

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Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Hesston College** seeks applicants for the position of ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications include good communication skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education and familiarity with the Mennonite Church. The counselor will develop and implement a territorial recruitment plan, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel and represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred.

  To apply, send resume and references to Clark Roth, Vice President for Admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For more information, phone 620-327-8212 or email <clarkr@hesston.edu>. Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

- **Eastern Pennsylvania church planters conference:** May 19-20 at Morgantown Community Church, Box 468, Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-5153.

- **Hope Mennonite Church** <www.hopemennonite.com>, a congregation of 200 members in Wichita, Kan. (pop. 400,000), seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***.

  Send inquiry to Search Committee, Hope Mennonite Church, 868 N. Maize Rd., Wichita, KS 67212; email <margaret@hesston.edu>.

- **West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship**, Philadelphia, <http://welcome.to/wpmf>, seeks half-time ***pastor*** to join its pastoral team. Candidate must be committed to Anabaptist understanding of faith and desire to live and work in urban area. Women and minorities are encouraged to respond. All inquiries welcome.

  Renee Warnick, WPMF Pastoral Search, 4638 Hazel Ave. Apt. 2, Philadelphia, PA 19143; 215-681-6534; fax 215-844-6655; email <the.warnicks@verizon.net>.

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., has paid summer positions available for ***counselors, cook, assistant cook, day-camp counselor and maintenance worker*** June 24-Aug. 17. Also needed are weekly kitchen and maintenance volunteers.

  Information at 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email <bbc@valley.net>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 325) invites applications for a full-time position as ***teacher of mathematics, gr. 7-8***, for 2001-02. Teaching experience and facility in problem-solving math are desirable qualifications.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <akdueck@bethanycs.net>.

- **Warwick River Christian School**, with 300 students and halfway between Colonial Williamsburg and Virginia Beach, needs Mennonite certified teachers for 2001-02 at ***K5, G1, G2 and G3 levels***. Suburban Hampton Roads area features history, art, water, technology and more.

  Respond to Susan Ackerman, Principal, 252 Lucas Creek Road, Newport News, VA 23602; 757-877-2941; email <GorZook@yahoo.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University**, a private, Christian liberal arts institution located in Harrisonburg, Va., seeks applications for the position of ***head women's basketball coach/fitness operations coordinator***. This position is responsible for all aspects of the NCAA Division III women's basketball program and will provide leadership, development and coordination to the university-wide fitness program. The successful candidate must possess a strong commitment to the mission, philosophy and goals of a Christian liberal arts education. Minimum requirements include (1) high school head coaching or college head/assistant coaching experience, (2) bachelor's degree in health/physical education or related field, (3) experience in working with young people, preferably in a college or youth ministry setting, (4) familiarity with NCAA Division III rules and regulations, (5) strong organizational abilities in planning, managing, supervising and budgeting, (6) knowledge and/or work-related fitness/weight room experience, (7) willingness to work evenings and weekends. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. Beginning date: Aug. 1, 2001.

  Send a letter of application, resume, response to application question, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three professional references to Anthony Resto Jr., Director of Human Resources, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4108; email <restoa@emu.edu>. Review of applications will begin April 18, 2001, and continue until the position is filled. Application materials are available at <www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/womenbballcoach.htm>. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. AAEO employer.

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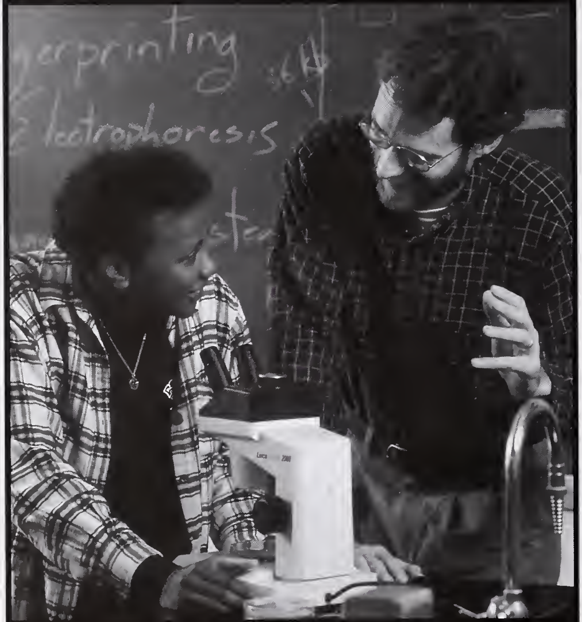

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

A Month of Sundays: Making Sense of Things by Earle W. Fike Jr. (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) provides a month's worth of Fike's best sermons, which are confrontational without being judgmental, invitational without being imperative.

Labyrinths From the Outside In: Walking to Spiritual Insight—A Beginner's Guide by Donna Schaper and Carole Ann Camp (SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2001, $16.95) tells the history and philosophy of the labyrinth walk—a circuitous path that people have used in prayer and meditation for thousands of years. The book offers directions for making a labyrinth of one's own or finding one nearby, plus guidance on ways people use labyrinths creatively. Order from Sunset Farm Offices, Route 4, P.O. Box 237, Woodstock, VT 05091.

Worshiping God: A Worship/Education Guide for Congregations by Eleanor Snyder, Susan Allison Jones and Ken Hawkley (Faith & Life Resources, 2001, $4.95) includes suggestions for congregational worship and education to complement the broadly graded children's curriculum for summer 2001.

The Fragmentation of the Church and Its Unity in Peacemaking, edited by Jeffrey Gros and John D. Rempel (Eerdmans, 2001, $25), offers an ecumenical discussion of the relationship of the church to its peacemaking mission from the standpoints of history and the contemporary context. Contributors (including Mennonites John D. Rempel and Lois Barrett) representing 10 major faith traditions address this topic from the perspective of their own churches and explore paths that could lead to the reconciliation of existing differences.

Cotton Patch Parables of Liberation (25th Anniversary Edition) by Clarence Jordan and Bill Lane Doulos (Herald Press, 2001, $9.99) moves beyond glib words and familiar interpretations of Jesus' parables to reveal that religion, wealth and culture tend to imprison us. Properly understood, Jesus' parables can liberate us and lead us into the kingdom of God.

Seeking Peace: My Journey by Atlee Beechy (Pinchpenny Press, 2001, $10) is a posthumously published autobiography of a former professor of peace studies at Goshen (Ind.) College who devoted much of his life to promoting peace proactively in many of the world's conflict zones. The book includes ink drawings by Edna Kennel and a 16-page photo section. To order call 219-535-7450.

Praying the Psalms: A Commentary by Stanley L. Jaki (Eerdmans, 2001, $16) seeks to help Christians pray the Psalms in such a way that they may truly become part of a "reasoned service" (Romans 12:1).

31 More Great Bible Studies for Youth by Keith Stulp (CRC Publications, 2001, $15.95) aims to make Bible study more interesting for teens. The book includes reproducible handouts and is also available on disk.

You Can't Help But Listen: User-Friendly Oral Communication by Charles R. Munson (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) is for Christians who are making public declarations before audiences in any kind of circumstance. This includes Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, preachers and teachers of preachers.

If I Cry, Will Someone Understand Me? Violence and the Church's Response: Finding Hope and Healing by Pauline Zimmerman (Pearl Publishers, 2000, $13.99) helps explore religious beliefs and their impact on abusive situations as well as how abuse affects people's religious beliefs. Order from 1801 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601-6522.

Spring 2001 Resource Guide from Alternatives for Simple Living offers resources at reduced prices. This catalog contains works on simpler living for children and adults. Contact 800-821-6153; email <Alternatives@SimplerLiving.org> or visit the web site: <www.SimpleLiving.org>.

Broken Hearts … Healing: Young Poets Speak Out on Divorce (Poet Tree Press, 2001, $14.95) includes poems of almost 200 children ages 9-17 who are survivors of the trauma of divorce. To order contact 90 N. 100 East, Logan, UT 84321, visit <www.poettreepress.com> or call 888-618-8444.

God's Pace: Stress and Psalm 23 by James G.T. Fairfield (Herald Press, 2001, $10.99) uses advice from Psalm 23 to tell us to use stress as an opportunity to discover a new way of living in the reality of God.

Recommended reading

The Robe of God: Reconciliation, the Believers Church Essential **by Myron S. Augsburger (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99), while not groundbreaking, claims reconciliation as "the central experience and doctrine of the Christian faith." Augsburger develops a basic theology from a perspective he calls "Christological realism." He presents an Anabaptist balance of grace and discipleship, drawing on Mennonite and other sources. The book may be a struggle for the general reader, though the stories Augsburger weaves in help its readibility.*—gh***

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Gordon Houser

We are not alone

They can let your lonely heart sink like a stone, but you are not alone.—"You Are Not Alone" by the Washington Squares

As with many difficulties, when we feel abandoned or alone, we can look to Jesus as an example to guide us.

In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus found himself alone. His close disciples had fallen asleep, and he was in agony as he faced his impending arrest and death.

The Gospel of Luke makes this agony vivid, noting that "his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground" (22:44b). Despite this awful situation, Jesus was able to remain faithful unto death. He recognized that ultimately he was not alone, that his life in God placed him in intimate contact with the Father.

After his death, Jesus' disciples faced their own anguished loneliness. The one who had called them out of their normal existence into an anticipation of the coming kingdom of God was dead. The Romans, the enemies they hoped Jesus would defeat, had instead killed him in the most humiliating method available. Now their hopes were dashed and they feared for their lives.

We need to keep turning to Jesus, who faced abandonment but overcame his despair and eventually experienced resurrection. That is our calling, to live in the power of Christ's resurrection (Philippians 3:10).

On Easter we celebrate what came next. Jesus rose from the dead, walked with them, encouraged them. Later the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus' followers, and the church was born.

The church is God's gift, a community where we can find intimacy and live in the knowledge that we are not alone. Myron Augsburger writes in his new book *The Robe of God*, "Community is participation in grace, a oneness that comes by our common center, fellowship with Jesus."

In spite of this gift from God, this community we join when we give ourselves to Jesus, we still feel alone, even abandoned. We lose sight of the reality of God being with us always.

Many forces around us inhibit our sense of community. Our consumeristic society is built upon the notion that individuals are to purchase things—and keep purchasing things—in order to find fulfillment. But, of course, one never finds fulfillment and must go to the store, the catalog, the web site once more to find that product that will at last bring meaning to one's life.

Another cardinal rule of our wider culture is that we are separate individuals who should be self-reliant. What greater stigma is there today than being on welfare? In our context, the Bible's attention to the care of widows and orphans seems strange. As Rodney Clapp points out in his book *Border Crossings*: "This understanding of self as individuated, isolated and in control of its own destiny is, ironically, a social and historical creation. ... The self as 'individual' (literally 'undivided one') is barely more than two centuries old."

The idea of a separate self is indeed foreign to the Bible. God created us in relationship. We are not isolated individuals. Yet we often feel isolated and live under the illusion that we are separate.

The church is one place that can help us overcome these powerful forces of consumerism and individualism. We are called by Jesus to love one another. Indeed, that is how people will know that we are disciples of Jesus (John 13:35).

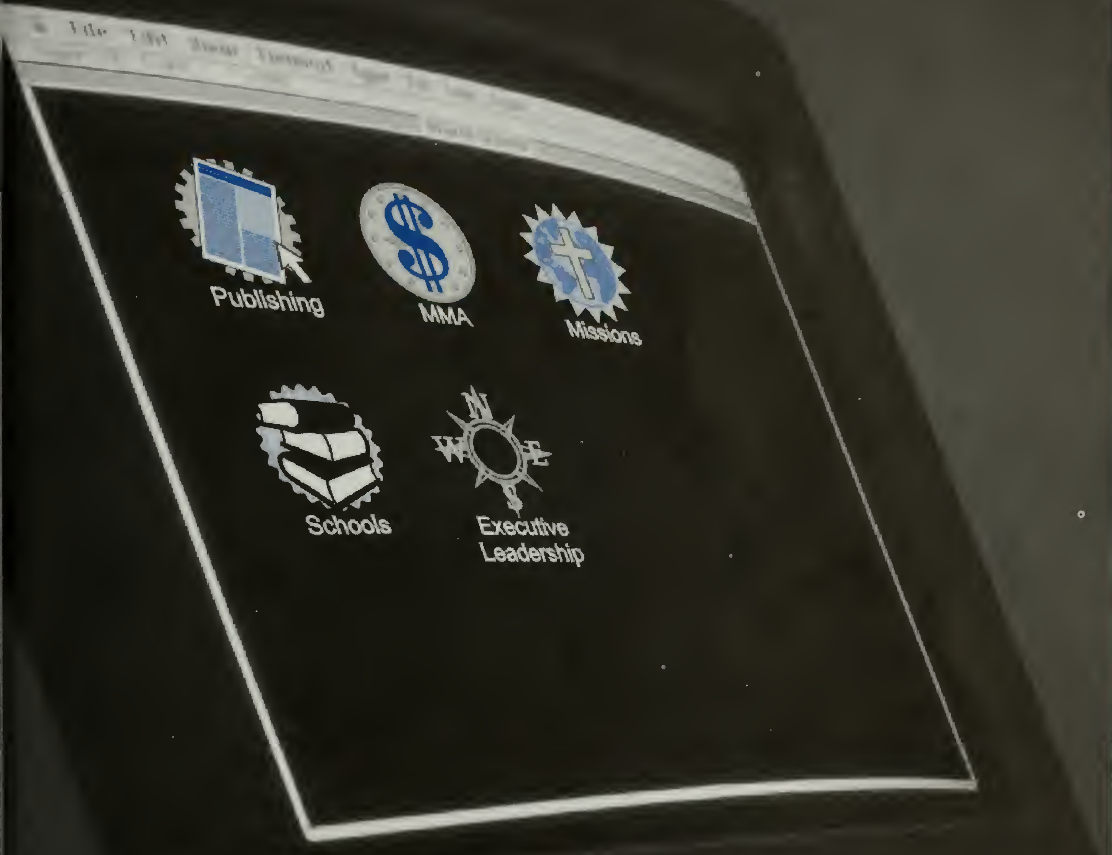
Alas, the church often fails to live out this command. We need to keep turning to Jesus, who faced abandonment but overcame his despair and eventually experienced resurrection. That is our calling, to live in the power of Christ's resurrection (Philippians 3:10).

But we must not pretend to do that alone. We need each other's care—through prayer, encouragement, counsel, physical aid and, most of all, presence.

Let us remind one another that we are not alone. Together let us participate in God's grace, in the oneness that comes by our common center, fellowship with Jesus.—*gh*

the Mennonite

April 17, 2001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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Business or ministry?

The merger plans of Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press have revealed serious financial conditions of both houses, as well as the unfortunate shortfall for some of the employees at MPH ("Publishing Has Hard Issues to Cover," March 20). The moral obligations to the employees have already been noted. I doubt there has been any intentional mismanagement at MPH, for I believe more dedicated people can hardly be found. (On the minute chance that there has been some poor judgment, it of course should be rectified).

But this situation is only a symptom of the real issue that, to my knowledge, has not been addressed adequately, namely our basic philosophy of publishing. Is Anabaptist publishing seen as a business venture, which needs to operate according to prevailing marketing strategies? Or is publishing to be seen as a mission arm of the church, on an equal ideological and financial footing with mission work, however that is understood? Or is it a combination of both?

If it is a business enterprise and profits are the defining criteria, then we face serious paradoxes: These would include that we publish what sells, which is not very conducive to promote what Anabaptism is all about. If we see it as mission on par with missions, as I do, then we need to subsidize publishing just like we do missions. When has a mission program been evaluated or shut down because it didn't make a profit?

If it is a combination of both, then it becomes even more confusing: How can the two philosophies be joined and integrated in practice? A friend recently told me that A.J. Metzler, longtime MPH publishing agent, thought there were two, perhaps three, ways to do it: (l) from the profits of other publishing ventures, such as Christian education materials; (2) from subsidization from the committees or organizations requesting materials to be published; (3) solicit donors for funds for the publishing cause.

If our publishing is to be a mission, then by definition it cannot produce popular religion; the marketplace tends to degenerate to the lowest common denominator, even in religious publishing. Thus the dilemma: Produce material that sells and makes money while making sure that it is faithful to our understanding of the gospel. Surely we are creative enough to think ourselves out of this dilemma.—*Calvin Redekop, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Peace and grace

This summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn., promises to be a significant moment in Mennonite history. Perhaps we will take a step closer to self-identity. We have been struggling with who we really are. We are not Roman or mainline. In our more presumptive moments we say we are "the Third Way." We are no longer shoofly pie or dress-code show-and-tell.

We are champions of peace. We do not participate in the violence of war. We are a voice for the passage of the Peace Tax Fund, so that not only our bodies are exempt from war but also our money. We write articles and books, preach sermons and quote Jesus in support of peace and love in human relations. Mennonite Central Committee has become an icon for the relief of suffering for the victims of violence.

Having run down this litany, how do we explain our small numbers? We have not even kept our own. How do we explain the long road scattered with Anabaptist splits and splinters? Our reason for being is peace. Why is it such an elusive reality?

I have several suggestions:

1. Trade our mindset on law for a commitment to grace. It doesn't matter how much we preach peace if our lives are not demonstrations of God's grace. Jesus said we are to be the light of the world and salt of the earth, not to illumine theological biases or preserve proof texts.

2. Let every congregation invest at least 10 percent of its annual budget in some community effort exposing its members to the community. Only by human contact can grace infect the population.

3. May the benediction at Nashville in some way reflect the sentiment of the closing words of Revelation: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people" (Revelation 22:21).
—D. Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.

Leave the fighting to someone else

The traffic toward truth and peace seems to be moving in different lanes. One group uses elaborate procedures to define the Scriptures, getting into it so deep that they seem to believe that if they can confuse with in-depth explanations, most people will concede for no other reason than that it sounds good. The criteria seem to be: Will it end peacefully? Will a high percentage agree? Will it accommodate folks? Will like-minded, influential folks agree? Will it end in the red or black financially?

The other group just reads Scripture and expounds on it the way it has been practiced

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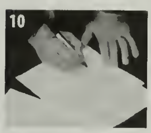
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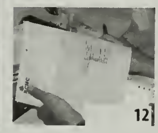
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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
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y readers say

for a long while. This group is so plain at its interpretation that it turns folks off, especially the dyed-in-the-wool Mennonites who have been running away from any type of discipline ever since the bishop told them they couldn't wear red shoes or a wedding ring.

Both groups agree on Communion, anointing, Jesus as the Son of God and a few other things. Are these commonalities sticky enough to bond the two groups together? Should they?

Is it not time to speak the truth from a dimension lived by those observers out here in the field? Are there any two Mennonite churches that are alike on all points? Is not the truth showing us that all churches are doing what is right in their own eyes? Are the churches that are crying the loudest about discipline the ones that want it for someone else? Have a few created an atmosphere of stress for many? Is it not true that no matter what happens, the true church will move on and in all reality be persecuted? Have we elevated education to the degree that it is worshiped above our ability to discern spiritual truth?

Finally, some members are asking why we all need to be at peace and see things the same way when it means compromising truth as it is revealed to simple folks. Is it a standard that when one stands firm on an issue that is clearly stated in Scripture from common interpretation, one automatically becomes hard-headed, old-fashioned, noncompassionate and unteachable? Is there not a better way? Perhaps both groups should smoke the peace pipe, give each other a holy kiss and go home to do what they do best. Leave the fighting to someone who can do it better.

This, too, shall pass with time. The question is how much damage will some continue to do to get what few really want.—*Jim Powers, Garden City, Mo.*

Cover photo by Corel Photos

While other controversies seem to pull us apart, on this matter we live with deliberate ambiguity.

—*Everett J. Thomas, Editorial, March 13*

Voiceless

Everett J. Thomas says that he feels comfortable with the ambiguity in the Mennonite church's stance on women in leadership (Editorial, March 13). He goes on to say that he thinks it is God's grace that enables us to refrain from taking a decisive stance on this issue. I do not see God's grace in this. I am angered and depressed to read that misogynistic views that attempt to relegate women to a lesser status than that of men, a status that precludes them from pastoral service in some congregations, are tolerated. I am especially saddened by this as a young Mennonite who is trying to find a new home congregation. I am sad because I will have to leave the Mennonite church if it continues to condone injustices such as the subordination of women. By refusing to state the basic fact that men and women are equal according to God, we take the opposite stance by default. I am sickened that the issue of women in ministry is still being used to suppress and suffocate the word of God as it attempts, in vain, to come to many congregations through the voice of women.

The same chauvinistic attitudes that lead to sexist interpretations of the Bible have also led to racist interpretations. One noteworthy example is 19th-century European and American use of the story of Ham seeing his drunken father, Noah, naked to conclude that God has cursed black people with dark skin, thus justifying slavery. In the context of a Messiah who attempted to lift people beyond the oppression of those people traditionally in earthly positions of power, use of Christian tenets to justify social injustice is inexcusable.

The contorted rationale of Jason Yoder's "The Head of the Woman Is Man" (March 13) could be used to require that a person be put to death if they eat ostrich (Deuteronomy 14:15), disobey their parents (Deuteronomy 21:18) or ridicule bald people (2 Kings 2:23), which the Bible, not Jesus, also calls for. I wonder why the fact that Jesus never says anything about women needing to cover their heads but instead attempts to lift women beyond the sexism of his day is not looked to first and foremost. I understand the main tenet of Christianity to be that one should follow Jesus. I hope that taking a clear stance on social injustices, such as sexism, can become the top priority of the Mennonite church. —*Carrie Oyer Meyers, Goshen, Ind.*

I would like to say amen to the concerns raised in letters by Jodi Hochstedler and Janeen Bertsche Johnson (Readers Say, March 27) in response to *The Mennonite*'s March 13 issue on women in the church. Think about it: a picture of a woman in a pulpit but articles and an editorial by three men. A picture of a woman was shown, but women's voices were unheard. I, too, wondered who Jason J. Yoder is. I share the concern about the lack of information about his identity.

By the way, I hope that *The Mennonite* continues to print letters representing diverse points of view and to place them at the beginning of the magazine. I doubt that I would subscribe if *The Mennonite* did not include Readers Say.—*Laura H. Weaver, Evansville, Ind.*

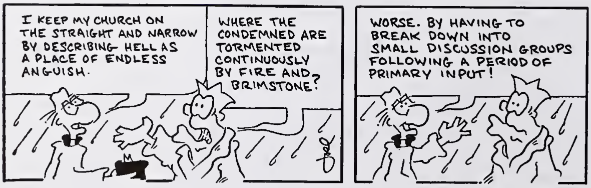
On the road

As I read Mike Brislen's "The Narrow Way of Jesus" (April 3), I reflected on a similar metaphor expressed in Lakota spirituality. I have had the privilege to work among American Indian and Alaska Native communities since 1962 and have felt their unusual spiritual strength in spite of being recipients of a long history of much injustice.

Black Elk (1863-1950), a highly respected Lakota holy man, talked much about the Red Road and the Black Road that humans must travel in their spiritual journey. The Red Road of the spirit is good and straight. It runs to the place where there is power of cleansing and healing. The Black Road is difficult and must be traveled by all. It leads beyond this world to the world of the spirit, is a hard road to travel and is a road of trouble and need. These two roads are in perpendicular directions. The point where they cross is holy and the Tree of Life flourishes.

I share this brief comment on an American Indian expression and understanding of our spiritual journey because of similarities with Jesus' way and the additional strength each gives to the other.—*George Brenneman, Elkridge, Md.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**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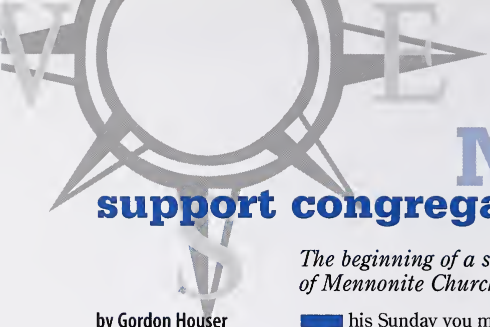


New agencies support congregations and conferences

The beginning of a series profiling the new program agencies of Mennonite Church USA

by Gordon Houser

This Sunday you may sing from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, which your congregation ordered from either Mennonite Publishing House or Faith & Life Press. Now it would come from a new agency formed out of what leaders call transformation. In the coming months, transformation will continue to take shape as new program agencies come into being.

Perhaps in supporting mission work you have written checks to the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions or the Commission on Home Ministries. In time you will need to write a check to a new agency formed out of those three.

In Nashville, Tenn., this July 2-7, delegates to the assemblies of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) will vote on the official merger of the two denominational bodies into Mennonite Church USA. But already, before that vote occurs, GC commissions and MC boards have been working at merging their efforts and forming new agencies. These merged agencies plan to operate regardless of the vote in July.

The agencies are not to do the work on behalf of the church but to support and enable the work of every congregation and conference.

These agencies represent a visible expression of newness. More than mere cooperation, these are joint entities. In this and upcoming issues of *The Mennonite*, we want to offer a profile of these new agencies: their histories, structures, mission and core values. These profiles will run in every other issue.

The agencies being formed relate to the following ministries: publishing, stewardship, mission, schools and executive leadership. In this issue we look at the publishing agency, which has recently formed and is called Mennonite Publishing House Inc.

The stated purpose of Mennonite Church USA is "to participate fully in God's work of setting things right in a broken world, redeeming and restoring all things in Christ to God's intended design as we live into God's future that has already begun."

The purpose of the program agencies is to help the church carry out this participation in God's work. Each agency sees itself as a resource to congregations and individuals that are part of Mennonite Church USA. The agencies are not to do the work on behalf of the church but to support and enable the work of every congregation and conference.

The overall vision that guides agencies, conferences and congregations is the one passed by delegates of both denominations in 1995 in Wichita, Kan.: "God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

As we all seek to follow this vision, we are called to both support the program agencies of the church and to help keep them accountable to this vision. Any structure can lose sight of its vision, its larger purpose, as it goes about its many daily tasks. Each agency needs to hear from constituents about the ways it is and is not helpful.

Whether we are GCs or MCs, we will be relating to agencies that are neither and both, agencies created out of GC and MC organizations but now transformed. Now they are agencies of Mennonite Church USA. We will need to develop new commitments to the programs we support.

As you read descriptions of each agency in the coming weeks, note ways you or your congregation may be able to use that agency's services. Pray for those working in that agency and think about how you might support its work.

These agencies consist of people who are members of Mennonite congregations, people called to their task and wanting to be faithful to that call. They are not mere bureaucracies. We are all called to help one another grow in grace, joy and peace.

Gordon Houser is associate editor for features for The Mennonite.

a profile

Mennonite Publishing House Inc.

Mission (proposed)

Mennonite Publishing House Inc. creates and distributes resources that instruct, inspire and challenge the church and the world to follow Christ.

Core values

MPH Inc. will provide resources that nurture faith and discipleship in a Believers' Church perspective.

- Publishing is a ministry of the church.
- Publishing is a business owned by the church.
- Publishing is a unique partnership between Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.
- Publishing is a global ministry.

(from a synopsis of a publishing transformation plan presented to the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA)

Mennonite
Publishing
House

History

MPH Inc. formed Feb. 1 out of the merger of Faith & Life Press and Faith & Life Bookstores of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Publishing House—including Herald Press and Provident Bookstores—of the Mennonite Church. The headquarters for FLP were in Newton, Kan., and for MPH were in Scottdale, Pa.

Structure

MPH Inc. is the only new agency whose board of directors includes Canadian and U.S. representatives and is accountable to the joint executive committee of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada. MPH Inc. includes a CEO/publisher, an executive vice president and vice presidents in the following areas: marketing, operations/printing, Provident Bookstores and editorial. The staff also includes a human resources director and a director of Faith & Life Resources. Books will be published under the Herald Press name. Curriculum and periodicals *Story Friends*, *On the Line*, *With*, *Purpose*, *Christian Living* and *Rejoice!* fall under Faith & Life Resources. MPH Inc. also includes 11 Provident Bookstores, which includes two Faith & Life bookstores, in Newton, Kan., and Berne, Ind.

Executive officers

J. Robert Ramer (until Aug. 1), Dennis M. Good

Board members

Glen Hostetler, chair, Mount Joy, Pa.; Ken Loewen, vice chair, Winkler, Man.; Jeff Wright, secretary, Pasadena, Calif.; Wes Sawatsky, treasurer, Altona, Man.; Carlos Romero, Goshen, Ind.; Eileen Roth, Crawfordsville, Iowa; Sandra Shiedel, Heidelberg, Ont.; Patricia Young, Macomb, Ill.

Budget

Gross sales budget is $20,384,916.

Agency index:

Number of books Herald Press and Faith & Life Press published in 2000: 51

Number of languages into which Herald Press books have been translated: 27

Number of employees at MPH Inc.: 340

Executive officers: Dennis M. Good (left) and J. Robert Ramer

Each agency is in the process of forming a new identity, so this profile is somewhat provisional and subject to change.

The limericks of Jesus

A different approach to Jesus' parables

by Ryan Ahlgrim

Dover

When I attended Goshen (Ind.) College in the late 1970s, Dennis MacDonald (now at Iliff School of Theology in Denver), taught an intriguing course on the teachings of Jesus. He gave particular attention to the parables and suggested that the limerick may be the closest modern parallel to the parable form used by Jesus. Both are short, oral, popular and conclude with a surprise or a bit of humor.

One of our assignments was to compose limericks based on Jesus' parables and submit them to a class contest. A friend of mine and I composed the winning entry:

There once was a black man from Samaria
who met a white man with malaria.
When honkies walked by,
he said with a sigh,
"I guess I had better take care'ya."

Jesus did not give lectures full of cognitive information about God's kingdom; he painted pictures, and he hoped those pictures would entice people to enter them.

This exercise struck a chord in me. The parable of the Good Samaritan became more than a puzzle to exegete and understand; it became, in limerick translation, a melody of the reign of God that inspired me.

More than 20 years have passed since that assignment, but I have continued to ponder the way Jesus' parables function. As a preacher, I have had ample opportunity to dissect and explain Jesus' parables for my congregations. But when I do this, something is missing—the spiritual experience of the reign of God. Jesus did not give lectures full of cognitive information about God's kingdom; he painted pictures, and he hoped those pictures would entice people to enter them. But it is hard for us to enter those original pictures today because we have heard the parables too often and with too many explanations of their meanings.

Here is where limericks may provide a fresh breakthrough. Limericks may be able to take the spiritual experiences of Jesus' parables and translate them into a new form with new images that convey much of the original spiritual experiences. A limerick-parable may provide a fresh encounter with God's reign, not only for the listener but also for the creator. With this goal in mind, I am working through each of Jesus' parables to turn the essence of each into a limerick.

The sheep and the goats: One of my favorite parables is of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31-46). What is most unnerving is that the sheep are oblivious that they have served the Lord at all. Rather than saying, "Be good or go to hell," this parable captures the subtle nature of true discipleship: It is done naturally, humbly and unwittingly. Salvation is a gracious surprise. In the following limerick I have tried to reproduce the surprising (and frightening) vision of salvation and judgment embodied in this parable:

When the sheep are all gathered, post-history,
their goodness to them is a mystery.
They saw not the Lord,
but compassion they poured,
so it's the goats who are feeling all blistery.

The dishonest steward: Another intriguing parable is of the dishonest steward (Luke 16:1-8). It is so morally bizarre, some commentators give up on understanding it, presuming that something essential got lost in the transmission. They may be right, but if we bracket our moral sensibilities and look at the story itself, we see a picture of radical action in response to an imminent crisis. Is this not at the heart of Jesus' call? Perhaps the parable is meant to be a metaphor of the shocking action required to avoid destruction and enter God's approaching reign. Even so, the morality and sincerity of the steward's actions are ambiguous. But perhaps they are meant to be; after all, the sincerity of repentance is always open to question. In light of these possibilities, I wrote the following limerick:

A steward decided to plunder,
which tore his employment asunder.
But when he cuts debts,
promotion he gets,
which leads us to shudder and wonder.

The prodigal son: The most famous of Jesus' parables is the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). This is his longest parable, with a complex plot. Reducing it to a five-line limerick seemed impossible. Yet the discipline imposed by brevity actually served to pinpoint the heart of the parable for me. Here is my attempt:

Little brother left town with the loot.
He returned when his life became brute.
Father hugged him so tight,
gave him all in his sight.
But the other son gave them the boot.

It seems to me that this limerick accomplishes two important things: First, the sincerity of the younger son's repentance remains ambiguous, as it is in the original. Second, it is an open question as to who is more right, the father or the older son. We are so used to viewing the father as the perfect embodiment of God's love that we have sometimes lost our ability to sympathize with the practical older son who is wanting to uphold moral accountability. Jesus' original parable poses a real spiritual dilemma and a difficult choice. Unlike Jesus' parable, my limerick has an ending. The choice of the older son to reject both his brother and his father (a strong possibility in the parable) is expressed in a more final form. But perhaps this unhappy ending heightens the need for us to make the choice between fairness and grace.

The Pharisee and the tax collector: The parable that speaks to me most personally is the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). As a teenager I once helped dramatize this parable during a worship service. I played the Pharisee. Afterward my mother told me I was a natural for the part. I felt offended, but she was right: I was a self-righteous, prideful person. Pride is a sneaky sin, easily infecting disciples who have the best intentions; and it is particularly virulent for those with genuine moral accomplishments. As I tried to come up with an adequate modern parallel, I wrote the following limerick:

There once was a pastor most pious
who viewed himself well, with some bias.
But a felon confessed,
and from God he was blessed,
while the pastor stood damned on the dais.

For me, this is my most successful limerick-parable because it moves beyond an exegetically inspired parallel to a divine word spoken to me. By turning the Pharisee into a pastor like myself, the parable continues calling me into my own ultimate encounter. I have created limericks for about half of Jesus' parables. I am thankful limericks are not high art, because I am no poet. The simplicity of limericks makes it possible for all us flat-footed people to try our hand at this spiritual exercise. As I continue my own parable translations, not only do I find the limerick creations a delight, but each gives me a new image through which to re-experience Jesus' stunning summons to enter God's reign.

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

tM asks

Mennonite Church USA leaders

Courtesy photo

In this monthly feature, moderator Lee Snyder and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman answer questions about the new denomination. Readers are welcome to submit questions to <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 1-800-790-2498.

Q

Some Mennonite congregations are introverted and focus primarily on maintaining their heritage. Others are relativistic in their theology and do not want to impose their spirituality on others. How will the new denomination address these tendencies in its effort to become missional?

A

We applaud the recent efforts of the mission transformation project to work with every congregation as a center of mission. This new direction recognizes the need for every congregation to become involved in mission. While some congregations will be much more active in mission than others, we hope that every congregation will take this call seriously. The new mission agency will work closely with conferences and the other agencies of the church to help integrate mission into all aspects of the church. Even more important than the organizational structure is our dependence on God to enliven and empower our congregations for mission.

Q

Recent appointments to Executive Board positions have been white men. Will the new church be committed to including women and people of color in denominational leadership roles?

A

Certainly. The new church is committed to including women and people of color in denominational leadership roles. The makeup of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA already reflects these commitments. We believe the church will benefit by drawing upon the leadership gifts of men and women, people of different ethnic origins, people in different age groups and people from different parts of the country. You will be seeing executive staff appointments that include women and people of color as positions are filled. The executive director of Mennonite Church USA is responsible to make appointments for executive offices, and the Leadership Discernment Committee selects people to be considered for many of the committees and agency boards of the new church. They all work from these same commitments.

Colorado congregation connects with Colombians through Lenten letters, fasting and contributions

I trust [Colombian Mennonites'] word more than those of U.S. politicians, and they are saying they feel endangered. We should respond based on what the marginalized people are telling us, not the powerful.

—Patrick Gillham

BOULDER, Colo.—When Patrick Gillham read the open letter from Colombian Mennonite church leaders, he was moved by the urgency in their pleas for North American Christians to stand with them against violence and despair.

"I felt that the Colombian church deserved some kind of response," Gillham said. "If someone comes to your door, you at least need to give them the courtesy of a response."

The letter, recently distributed as part of an information packet from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), motivated Gillham and his wife, Tammi Laninga, to talk to their fellow members of Boulder Mennonite Church. The church council decided to respond with fasting, prayer, donations—and more letters.

The letter to Colombian Mennonites offers encouragement and explains the actions the congregation is taking. "In learning of the difficulties and danger you are experiencing, we are called to unite with you," the congregation wrote.

The congregation is also sending letters to U.S. officials urging an end to the $1.3 billion U.S. aid package to Colombia, most of which is in military aid. The Boulder Mennonites say they feel confident in speaking out in part because of eyewitness accounts from their Colombian brothers and sisters.

"I trust [Colombian Mennonites'] word more than those of U.S. politicians, and they are saying they feel endangered," Gillham says. "We should respond based on what the marginalized people are telling us, not the powerful."

Colombia is embroiled in devastating fighting between right-wing paramilitary groups and leftist guerrillas, a conflict augmented by drug trafficking. The drug trade has now been used by the United States as a reason to intervene in Colombia with its military aid package, according to the Colombian Mennonites' letter.

"This military 'aid' will not put an end to the war nor eradicate drug trafficking," the letter says. "It will only increase the number of deaths and the suffering of the Colombian people."

The letter goes on, "Perhaps, brothers and sisters, it is precisely in order to support the Colombian churches in turning the governmental message of death from the North into life that God has placed you there in the nations of the North at this time."

MCC photo by Brian Ladd

Boulder Mennonite Church members Bill Unrau and Gretchen Williams sign a letter of support from the congregation to Colombian Mennonites, who are opposing escalating violence in their country.

"It seems particularly clear in Colombia that our nation is pouring a lot of money into actions that will just perpetuate violence," says Boulder member Brian Ladd.

The congregation's commitment to fasting was tied to the Lenten season. Every Friday during Lent, members were encouraged to fast for at least one meal and donate money they would have spent on food. Those donations were collected at Easter and will be sent via MCC to support Colombian Mennonite peace efforts. MCC so far has received about $9,000 for Colombian peacemaking.

"Our getting the [Colombians'] letter during Lent is significant," Gillham says. "We are fasting and praying as people awaiting resurrection, as people who are waiting for peace and justice to embrace—and participating in bringing that about."

Church council chair Susan Graber also said that Lent is traditionally a time of repentance, an appropriate attitude for North American churches that have been silent too long in the face of their brothers and sisters' suffering. The congregation is exploring ways to continue its response to Colombian Mennonites.

—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service

Milk for the body and food for the soul

Workers' goal more than better Mongolian dairy farming

BURGALTAI, Mongolia—Thanks to a $20,000 grant, Mongolian dairy farmers can hope to produce more feed for their livestock during the harsh winter months. And healthier livestock will mean more milk for a society where milk is a staple.

The grant, from the Newton, Kan.-based Schowalter Foundation, will help mission workers Bill and Mary Jane Yoder further develop a demonstration farm showing Mongolian herders how to grow and store enough feed to sustain their herds during the winter. The Yoders serve with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The foundation supports Mennonite projects. An initial Schowalter grant of $15,000 last year allowed the Yoders and their six children to complete much of the initial work on the farm, such as building a home and a barn on open prairie. The additional funding will allow the Yoders to complete the demonstration farm, making it profitable, replicable and self-supporting. They also hope to produce all the forage for the animals of the farm and build relationships with the local community.

The Yoders left their home in Salisbury, Pa., in 1999, and last May began construction on the farm at Burgaltai, a village of about 50 families.

"Cows are milked during the summer months, but as cold weather approaches and grass becomes shorter, the cows dry up," Bill Yoder says. The herders put up just enough hay to keep the animals alive until new grass appears in the spring. "By spring, these animals are little more than walking skeletons with skin draped over them."

The result is a severe milk shortage during the winter months, with milk prices five to six times higher than in summer.

"In some cultures, this would be of little consequence, but Mongolians consider milk to be very important," Yoder says. "Everyone drinks milk tea, and milk is a vital part of the Mongolian diet. In fact, many herder families live almost entirely on milk and milk products during the summer."

One of the goals of the project is to encourage winter milk production, making herding a viable business, instead of providing mere sustenance. The demonstration farm will show the importance of preparing sufficient animal feed for winter consumption. The Yoders have planted 125 acres of alfalfa and grass for the farm animals' forage needs.

"This part of the project is experimental, because no one knows how well alfalfa will do," Yoder says. "We'll know the outcome of this experiment next summer. In the meantime, we baled 4,200 bales of prairie hay that we're feeding to our cows this winter."

The farm is located near a railroad, a lifeline for hauling milk to market when the roads become impassable.

But agriculture is not the Yoders' only work. They have hung a motto in their home that quotes Joshua 24:15 in Mongolian: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

"Almost without fail, every Mongolian visitor's eyes are drawn to that motto," Yoder says. "Some of our workers and close associates have been asking lots of questions about the Bible and trying to understand God."

The Yoders provide Scriptures for anyone who asks. They also conduct a Sunday school class for children on Sunday mornings. The children then go home and report what they learned to their parents.

"We are praying for a body of believers to be raised up here in this location," Yoder says. "There are currently no resident believers in our county.

"We believe the model of Jesus going about doing good is the model for our lives. We believe the project is a genuine help to these people, and as such, God will use it for his purposes. Recently, we noticed that someone was taking some wood off our fence but never saw them in the act. After fresh snowfall, we tracked the culprits to their 'ger' [home]."

The Yoders discovered two elderly women who were quite ill and poor. "We had a nice visit and asked them to tell others not to take wood off of the fence," Yoder says. During several subsequent visits, they brought the women coal and groceries.

Soon after, the mayor of the village visited the Yoders, and they asked him to identify the poor in the community so they could help them. The man said he had heard about their reaching out to the two elderly women.

"We were merely living out our faith, not having any idea that others would observe what we were doing," Yoder says. "We trust the Scripture will be true that says, 'That they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.' "

The Yoders serve with Joint Christian Service, an organization of 15 agencies, including Mennonite Board of Missions, created when Mongolia opened its doors to the world in 1990 after 70 years of communist rule. JCS projects are government-approved.—*Chris Serio Martin for MBM News Service*

Illinois indicates merger support

The actions were unofficial, but Illinois Conference delegates have indicated their support of transformation at both the denominational and regional levels.

The 69 delegates at the conference's annual sessions March 30-31 in Lombard, Ill., were asked to complete a response form on transformation. Fifty-two percent were "quite enthusiastic" about the proposed membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA, while 32 percent said they "feel all right" about the guidelines. Twelve percent said they were "somewhat concerned," and 4 percent were "distinctly negative."

The Illinois delegates also gave overwhelming support to the idea of creating a merged area conference with Central District, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences. Sixty-two percent said they were "quite enthusiastic," and 25 percent said they "feel all right." Ten percent were "somewhat concerned," and one delegate was "distinctly negative."

After difficult start, MVS nurse finds assignment on U.S.-Mexico border to be eye-opening work

BROWNSVILLE, Texas—When Randy Plett decided, with his wife and three children, to leave his job as an oncology nurse in Winnipeg, and move to Brownsville for a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment, he knew there would be a period of adjusting to a new job. But he didn't think it would take five months just to get started.

When the Plett family arrived in July 2000, they and the MVS support committee thought Texas would honor Plett's Canadian nursing credentials and he could begin his assignment with the Brownsville Community Health Center immediately.

Texas didn't. In fact, Plett was told he needed to retake his nursing exam and, since he was not a U.S. citizen, take an English proficiency exam. Because the English proficiency exam is given only once a year, Plett would have needed to wait almost 10 months before getting his new credentials. So he decided to write the nursing exam in Arkansas, which did not require the English proficiency test, then transfer his credentials to Texas. Still, it was November before Plett received word that he had passed and could finally begin his assignment.

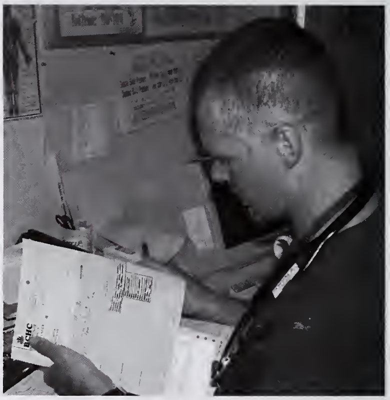
"It's tough to come into MVS and not feel useful," he says.

Though he managed to volunteer some with a school-based division of the health center and spent hours studying for the upcoming exam, Plett found the wait frustrating. "I was never that type of person [to have free time]. I was always busy," he says. "But now I had everything pulled out from under me. You start to [have] doubts about your assignment. You feel like you're bleeding MVS dry."

Plett was finally able to begin a nursing assignment last November, doing triage screening for the health center. Though it is not the assignment he had originally expected to fill, he is glad to finally be helping. In one morning, he had seen more than 20 patients in less than three hours.

"It's always busy here," he says. "It never stops."

The health center is the only nonemergency facility in the area that will accept uninsured patients. Many of them are migrant workers or illegal immigrants unable to get health insurance through their work. The center provides basic family practice-style services, as well as dental, OB-GYN and child immunization services. The waiting list for basic job physicals, which many people need to get jobs, extends into July.


MBM photo by Grant E. Rissler

Nurse Randy Plett, a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker in Brownsville, Texas, examines patient charts at the health center where he works. The center is the only nonemergency facility in the area that accepts uninsured patients.

"The need is huge," Plett says. "There are not enough resources, not enough time, not enough doctors."

The Canadian background that gave Plett such trouble in beginning his assignment provides him with a unique perspective on the health-care system he is now a part of in Brownsville.

"Coming from Canada, [the need] has been a real eye-opening experience," he says. "It's really hard sometimes, being from a socialized health-care system, seeing how many are falling through the cracks here. There is no social safety net, especially for the undocumented and the migrant workers. A huge percentage of the population is uninsured. They won't go to the hospital."

Though Plett acknowledges that a government's role in providing health services is a complex question, he feels that the people he treats are too often ignored by the government.

"Especially in the border towns, it's a social-justice issue," he says. "[President] Bush wants all these tax cuts. Why not put it into expanding the number of people covered by Medicare and Medicaid? The haves in the country want more, and the have-nots get less."—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

Bethel football play gets hustle award

When the football team from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., played Bethany College of Lindsborg, Kan., this past season, the game became an award-winning showcase for hustle.

Bethany's Levi Esses caught a short pass and ran down the sideline, seemingly bound for a touchdown. But Bethel defensive back Doug DeGroot came streaking from the other side of the field, caught Esses at the five yard line and punched the ball out of his hands and through the end zone, preventing the score and giving Bethel the ball.

DeGroot's play was named play of the year by the College Football Plays of the Year program.

"That spectacular, never-say-die tackle and strip of the ball just short of the end zone … was surely an inspiration," said program director Randall Beckham.

Plays of the Year considers plays nominated from all levels of college football.

Those who have ears, let them hear

New audio ministry coming for illiterate Muslims

NAIROBI, Kenya—In the mid-1970s, Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) worker David Shenk heard a late-night knock and discovered a cautious Muslim inquirer at his door. Shenk invited the visitor in, leading to the creation of a ministry that continues to grow after a quarter century.

During the next few years after that nocturnal visit, Shenk and a team of reviewers from different backgrounds developed the "People of God" course: four booklets to take a seeker through the Bible. Now, in addition to the printed word, POG is planning an audio ministry to broaden its outreach.

Designed for use in areas where people don't have background knowledge of the Bible, POG tries to use simple and culturally appropriate language to develop the major themes of the good news. The material is written with a Muslim religious worldview in mind. So instead of turning to Genesis, readers are referred to the "first book of the Taurat" or to the "Zabur" instead of Psalms.

This approach has made POG popular among Muslim inquirers. "A substantial number of inquirers have, according to their letters, come to the Lord," says POG director Joash Osiro. "Many more write to the office seeking more information."

The POG books continue to be in high demand around the world, having been or being translated into about 40 languages.

The POG office, staffed by Osiro and his wife, Rebecca, has its hands full. Aside from overseeing international requests and directing their East African students, they also give seminars on Islam to church leaders and work on new POG initiatives.

The idea for the latest project was born two years ago when Rebecca visited a group of Muslim women wanting to learn more about the Bible. But in East Africa, many women are not literate. So it was decided to put POG materials in audio format. POG staff hope to have the recording project finished this spring. Whether on cassette tapes or as a radio program, the new POG format has the potential to reach hundreds of thousands of people in the years to come.—*Darren Schnaupp for EMM News Service*

> **A substantial number of inquirers have, according to their letters, come to the Lord.**
>
> *—Joash Osiro*

With MCC help, Balkan refugees planting hope

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina—With help from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Church World Service (CWS, some of Bosnia-Herzegovina's 700,000 displaced people are revitalizing their prewar farms. But for most returnees, empty fields and homes coupled with few employment opportunities mean their return is only a first step on the long road to a normal life.

MCC and CWS are supplying seeds and machinery. To date 22,000 pounds of potatoes and 11,000 pounds of onions, plus rotary cultivators, water pumps, backpack sprayers and fertilizer have been distributed.

During the next two years, beneficiaries in the village of Lokve, about 75 miles south of Sarajevo, will give a percentage of their crops to a local soup kitchen as part of a repayment program. The soup kitchen is for all community members registered as living below the poverty line.

"In Mostar, where I was living as a refugee, I couldn't do anything," says farmer Ramiz Zaklan. "Here I won't go hungry. Thanks to this equipment, I can work in the fields and grow crops."—*MCC News Service*

MCC photo by David Martin

Rising up

Jeremy Denlinger (right), a student at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., joins a crew framing a house in El Porvenir, El Salvador, in the wake of the Jan. 13 earthquake that devastated the region. Mennonites from Guatemala, Belize, Canada and the United States recently joined their Salvadoran counterparts on a pilot project to construct six homes in El Porvenir. Organizers hope to build 40 to 45 homes in the area. Mennonite Central Committee is supporting the project. A January earthquake also rocked India, where MCC is supporting food-for-work projects, such as mending roads and building water reservoirs.

this date in Mennonite history

April 17, 1959—The Mennonite secondary school in Weierhof, Germany, reopens after being appropriated by the Nazis during World War II.

Correction: Larry and Maxine Miller own the former Mennonite Voluntary Service unit house in Mashulaville, Miss. The owner was misidentified in the March 27 issue.

MHS announces scholarship recipients

GOSHEN, Ind.—Three students have been awarded Elmer Ediger Scholarships from Mennonite Health Services for the 2001-2002 academic year. Each recipient receives $1,300 for studies in mental health, counseling or developmental disabilities. The three recipients are:

- Heath Greene, Pasadena, Calif., who is pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena. He attends Pasadena Mennonite Church.
- Paul Heidebrecht, Vancouver, who is pursuing a master's degree in social work at the University of British Columbia. He is a member of Bakerview Mennonite Brethren Church in Abbotsford, B.C.
- John Thurman, Alhambra, Calif., who is pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology at Fuller. He attends Pasadena Mennonite Church.

The scholarship is named for the late Elmer Ediger, one of MHS's founders and director of Prairie View mental health facility in Newton, Kan., from 1957 to 1983.

Three win honors in high school essay contest

WASHINGTON—Three high school students have won prizes in the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. Washington Office Public Policy Essay Contest.

First place and $500 went to Zachary Kurtz of Keyser, W.Va., who wrote "Our Inconsistent Stand for Peace," about conscientious objection to war taxes.

David Stucky of Moundridge, Kan., won second place and $250 for "The Death Penalty: A Justified Solution to Crime?" Third place was awarded to Jesse Nathan of McPherson, Kan., who also addressed the death penalty with "The Ultimate Injustice."—*MCC News Service*

Scholars organization continues to grow

TORONTO—Three years after its creation, the Anabaptist-Mennonite Scholars Network has reached 250 members, including professors, graduate students and others. Activities include maintaining a database of scholars, publishing a newsletter and hosting events.

The network is sponsored by the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. It was started in 1998 by Lydia Harder, then director of TMTC.

"While writing my thesis, I realized how much I needed dialogue with peers who shared my faith identity and were involved in similar work," she says. "The wider church must know who the scholars are and what they have to contribute."

Newsletters have explored whether scholars work self-consciously as Mennonites, how faith informs scholarship and whether "academic freedom" is a Mennonite value.

MCC photo by Richard McCutcheon

Barrels of bags

Workers with the Islamic Relief Agency prepare to unload barrels of Mennonite Central Committee school kits, which arrived in Baghdad, Iraq, last month. MCC sent 25,000 hand-sewn bags filled with notebooks, pencils, crayons and rulers. The kits will be distributed to schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods in and around Baghdad. MCC and the American Friends Service Committee recently restored 10 such schools through the Islamic Relief Agency.

Events

Hopi Mission School 50th anniversary celebration, July 20-22, Kykotsmovi, Ariz. For information contact <hms@hopimissionschool.org>; call 520-734-2453; or write HMS, P.O. Box 39, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039.

Workers

Lichti, Tim, began Dec. 1, 2000, as conference regional minister for Indiana-Michigan Conference.

Yoder, Joshua, was installed and licensed for pastoral ministry Dec. 17, 2000, at Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind.

Births

Borrero, Sergio Alejandro, Feb. 7, to José Borrero and Lucy-ann Boll-Borrero, Lancaster, Pa.

Boucher, Chantse Lee and Fayth Dana (twins), March 26, to Colette (Juhnke) and Jim Boucher, Topeka, Kan.

Clemens, Kurtis Hartman, March 23, to Bruce and Jennifer (Hartman) Clemens, Schwenksville, Pa.

Enns, Faith Elise, Jan. 29, to Brian and Delores (Heinrichs) Enns, Altona, Man.

Eshleman, Kayley Grace, Jan. 6, to Jennifer (Beachy) and Thomas Eshleman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Geyer, Rachel Elizabeth, Feb. 22, to Anna (Yoder) and Dave Geyer, Oxford, Iowa.

Hills, Marcus Cole, March 25, to Mark and Nicole Hills, Croghan, N.Y.

Holsopple, Sydney Anne, March 17, to Richard and Shelby (Moyer) Holsopple, Boswell, Pa.

Lindberg, Preston Christopher Gingerich, March 21, to Jeff and Lori (Gingerich) Lindberg, Iowa City, Iowa.

Ney, Rybeye Lugene Kreiger, Feb. 11, to Kathryn (Kreiger) and Randall Ney, Wellman, Iowa.

Penner, Noah Reid, Feb. 5, to Ryan and Sheryl (Wall) Penner, Winnipeg.

Rice, Shauna Raye, March 26, to Shawn and Susan (Grau) Rice, Castorland, N.Y.

Roberts, Ila Ann, March 22, to Anita (Das) and John Roberts, Indianapolis.

Shaffer, Grant Earl, March 23, to Krista (Coughenour) and Lucas Shaffer, Holsopple, Pa.

Showalter, Raven Michelle, March 18, to Ken and Marie (Hostetter) Showalter, Stuarts Draft, Va.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

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- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel *(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

2002

- **Service Tour in Sunny Jamaica** (January 25-February 3 *with Dave Worth*)
- **Australia & New Zealand** (February 8-28 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Hawaii** (February 14-24 *with Jane Landes and Carolyn Bontrager*)
- **Paraguay, Bolivia and Peru** (April 6-22 *with Edgar Stoesz and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Spectacular Scandinavia & its Fjords** (June 17-July 1 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 12-29 *with John Ruth and Henry Landes*)
- **Swiss Glacier Express** (August 12-26 *with John Ruth and Glen Landes*)

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Deaths

Albright, Bertha, 91, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died March 17. Spouse: George Albright (deceased). Parents: Val and Ida Schrag Stucky (deceased). Survivors: daughter Georgianna Cloud; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 21 at First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie.

Byler, Maude Miller, 91, Goshen, Ind., died March 1. Spouse: Archie Byler (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Katie Bontrager Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Louise Burkhead, Lucille Torrance, Delta Basile, David, Eldon, Richard, Robert, Gaylord; 27 grandchildren. Funeral: March 5 at Plato Mennonite Church, Lagrange, Ind.

Cender, Robert Joseph, 64, Fisher, Ill., died March 5. Spouse: Joan Schaer Cender. Parents: Raymond (deceased) and Irene Birkey Cender. Other survivors: daughter Angela Beachey; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 10 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher.

Friesen, Susan Derksen, 90, Altona, Man., died March 21. Spouse: David Friesen. Parents: Frank and Katharina Derksen (deceased). Other survivors: children Gladys Hildebrand, Evelyn Isaac, Marge Schellenberg; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 25 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Froese, Anna Falk, 82, Altona Man., died March 5. Spouse: Abe Froese (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Kornelia Wiebe Falk (deceased). Survivors: children Art, Pat Elias, Garry; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 10 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Horn, Reola Friesen, 84, Fresno, Calif., died March 22. Spouse: Menno Horn (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Dick Friesen (deceased). Survivors: daughter Sharon Lantia; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 26 at Mennonite Community Church, Fresno.

Knox, Earl, 91, Paxton, Ill., died March 21. Spouse: Catherine Ingold Knox (deceased). Parents: Albert and Amanda Kropf Knox (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Darling, Amanda Osborn; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 24 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Rensberger, Leonard, 84, Wellman, Iowa, died Feb. 17. Spouse: Myrtle Gingerich Rensberger. Parents: Roy and Mary Yoder Rensberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Roy Jr., Francis, Sharon Plank, Alta Wagner; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

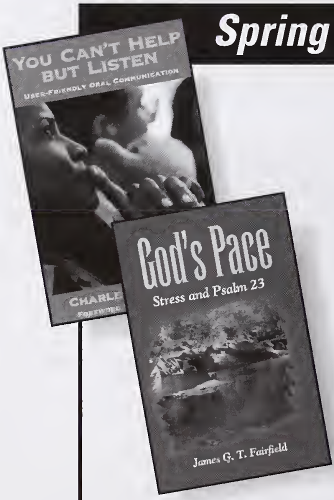
Streid, Ralph, 82, Chenoa, Ill., died March 18. Spouse: Violet Goertz Streid. Parents: Jesse and Mary Ann Roszhart Streid (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Leatherman, Diane, Keith, Tony, Bryan; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 22 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa.

Tanious, Shokry, 75, Mount Joy, Pa., died Feb. 23. Spouse: Faiza Rizik Tanious. Parents: Issac Tanious and Faiza Botrous Gerges (deceased). Other survivors: children Mofeed, Shohdi, Adel, Amany Haidy; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at St Mary's Coptic Orthodox Church.

Wahl, Cornie, 87, Altona, Man., died Feb. 25. Spouse: Helen Wahl. Parents: George and Anna Dyck Wahl (deceased); stepmother Margaret Wahl (deceased). Other survivors: children Dorothy Klassen, Albert, Regg, Ken; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Louise Zook, 95, Goshen, Ind., died March 29. Spouse: Harold Yoder. Parents: John and Cotna Kauffman Zook (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Mary Sue Miller; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Spring Releases from Herald Press



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classifieds

- **Eastern Pennsylvania church planters conference:** May 19-20 at Morgantown Community Church, Box 468, Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-5153.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** seeks to employ an ***administrator***, Aug. 1, 2001. Preferred credentials: teaching/administrative experience/training, M.A. Call 717-626-9551.

- **North Leo Mennonite Church** (12 miles north of Fort Wayne, Ind.) seeks ***minister of music***, 8-10 hrs. per week. Immediate availability.
  Call 219-627-2149 or send resume to Box 213, Leo, IN 46765.

- **Mennonite poets**, please bring a collection of your ***poems to the Nashville convention***. Schleitheim Stage will feature Poetry Hour from 6-7 p.m. daily. We want to hear your voice.
  Refer questions to <jdanielhess@juno.com>.

- **Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church**, a small, diverse, urban congregation, invites applicants for a full-time position as ***pastor***.
  Contact Lori Schmidt, 1311 Faith Drive #29, Salina, KS 67401; email <lschmidt_30@yahoo.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks applicants for ***media producer*** to lead EMM's media staff, functions and projects. Experience with a wide range of communications media required.
  Contact Sherill at EMM, 717-898-2251; email <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Jubilee Association** seeks a ***director of accounting & finance*** for growing, Mennonite-affiliated nonprofit. Supervise or perform all accounting functions: A/P, A/R, P/R; collaborate on and monitor operating budget, cash flow and investments, maintain GL, generate and analyze F/S, supervise bookkeeper, advise Exec. Dir. B.S. and 3 yrs. exp., strong PC skills. 42K, full bene. and great working environ.
  Send letter & resume to HR, Jubilee Association, 11141 Georgia Ave. #324, Wheaton, MD 20902; <hrmanager@jubileemd.org>.

- **Hope Mennonite Church** <www.hopemennonite.com>, a congregation of 200 members in Wichita, Kan. (pop. 400,000), seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***.
  Send inquiry to Search Committee, Hope Mennonite Church, 868 N. Maize Rd., Wichita, KS 67212; email <margaret@hesston.edu>.

- **Shalom Christian Academy** (K-12; enrollment 400) is seeking a full-time ***high school principal/teacher*** and a ***high school Spanish teacher***. SCA is a parent-owned school with an Anabaptist tradition.
  Send resume to Conrad Swartzentruber, 126 Social Island Rd., Chambersburg, PA 17201; email <shalom@shalomca.com>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has a fall opening for a ***teaching position*** in the resource room. Special education/NILD certification preferred.
  Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***assistant principal, middle-school teacher, teacher aide***.
  For more information, contact Ib Thomsen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.
  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Shalom Community Church**, Ann Arbor, Mich., a Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregation in a thriving, large university setting, seeks candidates for a full-time ***pastor*** position.
  For more information or to apply, contact Search Committee, 3578 Lamplighter, Ann Arbor, MI 48103; 734-761-7366; <showalterh@aol.com>; <http://www.shalomcommunitychurch.mi.us.mennonite.net/>.

Senior Vice President of Marketing

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking a Senior Vice President of Marketing. The person in this position will be responsible for all sales and marketing functions of MMA.

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M M A

Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School seeks a full-time faculty member to serve in the ***Peacemaking and Conflict Studies*** program. The position includes a teaching/academic (ca. 70%) component and a professional/practical component. The Peacemaking and Conflict Studies program is housed in the graduate school's Division of Leadership, Conflict and Peacemaking and has achieved a reputation for excellence. Faculty at Fresno Pacific are unranked. Position begins August 2001.

Responsibilities: Teach both undergraduate and graduate courses in conflict studies and peacemaking; advise master's projects/theses and supervise field placement; provide training, consultation and mediation services through the Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies; participate and contribute to program development and activities of the academic programs in the field as well as the university's Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies.

Qualifications: Earned doctorate with specialization in peacemaking and conflict studies; significant experience in the practice of peacemaking, including mediation; committed to an Anabaptist orientation and understanding of peacemaking are required. Membership in a Mennonite or Believer's Church congregation, successful college or university teaching experience and evidence of scholarly achievement are desired.

Compensation dependent on qualifications and experience. Benefits include insurance (medical, LTD, life, dental—effective Jan. 2002), retirement (TIAA, CREF), Section 125 options and tuition remission for dependents.

Send a letter of application, a completed Faculty Application form (with related documents), three letters of reference and transcripts or placement file to: Dr. Howard Loewen, Provost, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023; fax 559-453-5502.

Applications will be reviewed beginning April 16, 2001, and the appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University in its hiring practices does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

classifieds

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/ development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.

  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis. Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for a full-time ***computer teacher/technology coordinator*** in a K-8 school of 360 students in the Akron/Canton area.

  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; email <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **Free barn board and beams** available. Looking for total removal of Hamilton, Ont., barn. Call 905-389-4841.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 325) invites applications for a full-time position as ***teacher of mathematics, gr. 7-8***, for 2001-02. Teaching experience and facility in problem-solving math are desirable qualifications.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <akdueck@bethanycs.net>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***elementary 4th-grade teacher, middle school science/math, middle school Bible/social studies***. Bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.

  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English; interest in directing musical/drama also desired. One year, full-time.

  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.

  Keyboarding and intro computer instructor: Teaching and supervising computer lab. Part- or full-time.

  Asst. boys' resident director: Youth ministry position for person with good communication and mentoring skills. Full-time, VS position.

  Head tutor: Coordinating and supporting tutoring staff; one-on-one instruction/support; interest in working with international students desired. Part- or full-time.

  Kitchen assistant: Afternoon-evening shift. Part-time.

  Coaches: Head girls' soccer, head girls' basketball, JV boys' soccer.

  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

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Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School seeks an innovative full-time faculty member to serve as ***director of the elementary education program*** and assume leadership of coursework in reading/language arts. The director serves as a member of a collaborative teacher education team that is committed to preparing candidates to be effective teachers in classrooms with multilingual, multiethnic populations. Fresno Pacific University is rooted in the liberal arts and situated in the heart of the great central valley, serving people from a wide diversity of religious, ethnic and national traditions. The Teacher Education Division is housed in the graduate school, which offers programs in education, counseling and leadership. The graduate school is committed to offering programs that meet the needs of individuals, view both education and learners holistically and model learning in community. Faculty who teach in the credential programs collaborate regularly with faculty in the advanced credential and master's degree programs.

Responsibilities: Provide leadership to the elementary education (multiple subjects) program including program development, student advisement and university-school partnerships; teach reading/language arts methods courses required for multiple-subject candidates; mentor a cadre of master teachers and supervise field placements.

Qualifications: Earned doctorate with specialization in reading or earned doctorate in early childhood, elementary education or curriculum with a focus on literacy; ample experience teaching reading/language arts in K-8 classrooms characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity; demonstrated success and/or interest in teaching reading courses for university students; desire to work collaboratively with faculty; interest and experience in teacher research and university-public school partnerships; demonstrated leadership capabilities are all required. Experience with (a) supervision and support of beginning teachers, (b) working knowledge of a second language are desired. We are especially interested in candidates who are sensitive to the needs of the diverse population of the central valley of California and who are skillful and committed to addressing the language and cultural concerns of all students through a variety of course materials, teaching strategies, program planning and advisement.

Compensation dependent on qualifications and experience. Benefits include insurance (medical, LTD, life, dental—effective Jan. 2001), retirement (TIAA, CREF), Section 125 options and tuition remission for dependents.

Applications will be reviewed beginning April 30, 2001, and the appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University in its hiring practices does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Send a letter of application, a completed Faculty Application form (with related documents), three letters of references and transcripts or placement file to:
Dr. Howard Loewen, Provost, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023; fax 559-453-5502.

by Gordon Houser

Lately the environment has been in the news. But that's not usually a good thing. In the new Bush administration, providing gas and oil for our consumptive habits is taking a greater priority than caring for our planet for future generations.

Still, we cannot simply blame the government. All of us who drive cars and use more resources than we need are culpable. And wringing our hands won't help.

Ecological footprint: The Winter issue of *Spirituality & Health* includes the article "We Have Spotted Bigfoot and It Is Us," which mentions a website, <www.rprogress.org>, that helps us calculate our ecological footprint. This is defined as "how much productive land and water we occupy to produce all the resources we consume and to take in all the waste we make."

The website explains: "Nature provides an average of 5.5 acres of bioproductive space for every person in the world. … Already humanity's footprint may be over 30 percent larger than what the world has to offer as it consumes more than what nature can provide." Meanwhile, "the average American uses 30 acres to support his or her current lifestyle. This corresponds to the size of 30 football fields put together. In comparison, the average Canadian lives on a footprint one-third less, and the average Italian 55 percent less."

Doing this exercise helps us realize our part in the problem. The website offers other ideas for doing something about it.

But acting merely out of guilt or obligation will not take us far. How we see ourselves and our world have much to say about how we act.

'A world sanely used': Joseph Sittler was a biblical theologian who died in 1987. He wrote numerous essays and spoke often about nature and grace. A recent book, *Evocations of Grace: Writings on Ecology, Theology and Ethics*, edited by Steven Bouma-Prediger and Peter Bakken (Eerdmans, 2000, $20), collects some of Sittler's writings. In one he wrote: "Use is blessed when enjoyment is honored. … And a world sacramentally received in joy is a world sanely used."

When we see the world as holy, created by God, something to be enjoyed, not merely used and discarded, we treat it with greater respect. We want it to last. Sittler calls the creation "our home for a while, the anchorage of our actual selves."

Thus theology, how we understand God, the world we live in and ourselves as God's creatures, has an important bearing on how we relate to the environment. It is not just an ivory tower exercise separate from reality.

Anabaptist view: Another recent book collects essays by Mennonites. *Creation & the Environment: An Anabaptist Perspective on a Sustainable World*, edited by Calvin Redekop (Johns Hopkins, 2000, $15.96), examines the major causes of our ecological crisis, then explores an Anabaptist view of humanity's relationship to the created order.

Some of the writers may protest too strongly that theirs is a distinctive, Anabaptist voice, especially when they don't always agree with each other. Nevertheless, the book shows that Anabaptists have a rich resource of tradition to draw on that will help us tackle a major issue.

The introduction quotes Barry Commoner about how critical this issue is: "We have come to a turning point in the human habitation of the earth. Continued plundering and pollution of the earth, if unchecked, will eventually destroy the fitness of this planet as a place for human life." James M. Harder and Karen Klassen Harder add that "the drive for unrestrained economic growth itself has become the most important problem facing humanity."

Thomas Finger offers a general theology of creation from an Anabaptist perspective. He concludes, "The process that brings everything under Jesus' lordship includes his life, death and resurrection and creation's subsequent renewal up to the eschaton (the end of history as we know it)."

Creation ethic: In developing an Anabaptist creation ethic, Heather Ann Ackley Bean takes a less anthropocentric approach than Finger's but draws on Mennonite beliefs. She writes, "As Anabaptists make the environmental position a matter of mutual admonition, we can challenge and support each other to live in ever more sustainable ways for the sake of God's creation and future generations."

This gets us closer to addressing how we should respond to this crisis. In a concluding essay, Redekop offers practical advice. This is not new or particularly Anabaptist: consume less, support global population control, leave the world a better place and change ourselves. Not new, but good reminders. Then he quotes Hans Hut, an early Anabaptist martyr, on the role of creation: "For the whole world with all creatures is a book written from nature by the Spirit of God."

Creation & the Environment shows how our beliefs can help us face this crisis in our world.

videos

Wonder Boys (R for language and drug use) won't appeal to everyone. A subtle satire about writers and academia, this small film delves into the life of Grady Tripp (Michael Douglas), a creative writing prof whose first novel was a critical and popular success. But he can't finish his second novel, which has ballooned into a 2,611-page manuscript. During a weekend of hilarious troubles, he must confront his fear of commitment, of living. The writing and acting here is masterful.

Mennonite artist in award-winning web site

A web site designed by Lightsky Design Studio has won a Surfer's Pick award from Yahoo!, an Internet search engine. The site for God's Eye Art Inc. debuted Oct. 1, 2000. <GodsEyeArt.com> features the work of Elkhart, Ind., artist Chad Friesen, who has been showing and selling his paintings across the United States since 1990.
—*Goshen News*

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Publish or perish

There is a traditional belief that a scholar must publish many articles and books in order to establish and maintain a credible identity in academic circles.

The same principle can be applied to a denomination and its identity within the broader faith community. Unless the new Mennonite Church continues to publish in North America, our church will not remain distinctive from other streams of Christianity.

Consequently, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA have agreed to remain in partnership for this endeavor. Since this is the remaining binational program agency, we decided to begin our series on emerging church agencies (see page 6) with the newly formed Mennonite Publishing House Inc.

This agency carries a critical responsibility for the long-term health of Mennonite congregations. It is expected to produce Christian education curriculum that teaches children and adults our faith tradition. Every few decades we need a new hymnal that sustains our musical traditions and injects new songs and lyrics into our hymnody. We must have Bible commentaries that describe how we understand Scripture from an Anabaptist Mennonite perspective. We need specialized books such as the Minister's Manual, which provides common rituals for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

To remain a distinctive people with a unique theological tradition, the new Mennonite Church needs a viable and creative publishing enterprise.

But our publishing enterprise does more than just produce material for our congregations. There is an outward orientation to this work that is usually not described as missional. Trade books that embody our theology are offered to the broader Christian marketplace. For example, the *More-With-Less Cookbook* has left millions of people with a first impression of Mennonites; through this best-seller they have come to understand that our convictions about justice extend to the very food we eat.

The chain of bookstores is another missional dimension of publishing. These 11 stores, located in storefronts and malls, invite shoppers who may have no other contact with Mennonites. The selection of merchandise for sale is a testimony to our values and beliefs. Except for congregations themselves, the Faith & Life and Provident bookstores are arguably the most public face of the emerging Mennonite Church in North America.

It is clear that the new Mennonite Church in Canada and the United States needs a strong and viable publishing program. What is less clear, however, is how to sustain such a program.

Recent reports in our magazine illustrate the challenges ahead. The newly merged Mennonite Publishing House Inc. is carrying a combined debt of $3.2 million on $18 million in gross sales last year. The publishing enterprises of both denominations have been expected to remain financially viable with little or no subsidy. However, the new MPH board has asked the denomination to address this assumption and consider subsidizing the publishing program in the future.

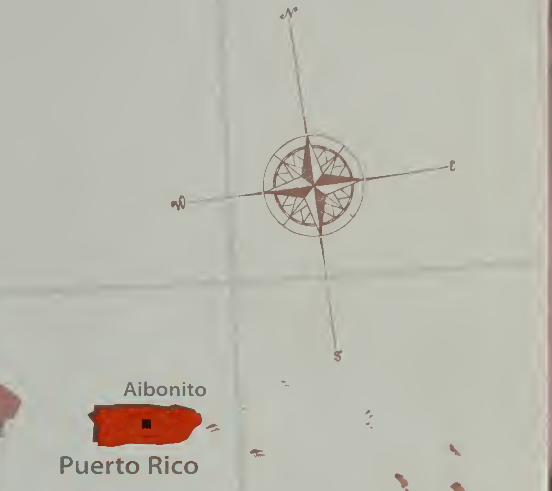
But perhaps a greater challenge lies ahead. As Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA develop increasingly separate identities, it will require great wisdom for this agency to discern what to publish. There are currently enough commonalities between the two groups for products such as curricula and hymnals. However, as the two churches continue to develop in separate national contexts, trying to publish for both may become increasingly difficult.

Regardless, to remain a distinctive people with a unique theological tradition in North America, the new Mennonite Church needs a viable and creative publishing enterprise. In many ways, the fate of this publishing enterprise is dependent on pastors and Sunday school teachers—those who decide what products the congregation will purchase—and the extent to which they are committed to helping the new church retain a distinctly Anabaptist and Mennonite identity.

Without this commitment, the new Mennonite Church may well perish.—*ejt*

theMennonite

April 24, 2001



Kindergarten class at Betania Mennonite School, Aibonito, Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico charts a new course

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12 Nepal mission work a family affair
20 Puerto Rico church deserves attention

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Methods of meditation

"Meditation Not So Mysterious" by Jan Johnson (March 20) is no doubt a good introduction to certain methods of meditation. She describes two approaches, through the senses and through the imagination, and also notes that through the ages Christians have found many ways to meditate. Since not everyone finds the same methods helpful or compatible, and because Johnson seems to dismiss a particular method as inappropriate for Christians, I wish to say a word in defense of what has been called "imageless prayer."

This form of meditation may well be practiced by other (Eastern) religious traditions, but of course that doesn't disqualify it for Christians, especially since it has a long history within the Christian tradition. Contemplation, nonconceptual prayer or just "resting in God" is not so much a matter of emptying the mind as it is becoming aware of the stream of thoughts and images that almost constantly flows through our minds. The discipline involves letting go of all these thoughts and images, even the most devout ones, in order to be utterly open to God as God is and not as we humanly imagine or want God to be. It is a form of prayer in which the person praying seeks no particular experience but rather a thorough yieldedness before God.

In the history of Western Christianity, this form of prayer has been linked with the methods of meditating on Scripture that Johnson describes, so it's not opposed to the use of the senses and the imagination. Nonetheless, for some people it may well represent a form of prayer that is more appropriate than prayer that is focused in thoughts, images or feelings. *—Keith Kingsley, Formosa, Argentina*

Women and men

I appreciate *The Mennonite* publishing two viewpoints on ministry in the March 13 issue ("I Will Pour My Spirit on All Flesh" and "The Head of the Woman Is Man"). It's important that we frequently listen to the beliefs of those with whom we disagree. In so doing, we test the validity of our convictions and also keep the channels of communication open.

But when will we be honest and admit that excluding women from leadership in our churches is simply an act of discrimination? It's no different from making African-Americans sit in the back of the bus or not letting people vote because of race or religion. Discrimination against women by keeping them out of the pulpit is sin. Ask for forgiveness and maybe then we will begin to deal with it in a righteous manner instead of pretending that it's acceptable behavior for a Christian institution.

By excluding women pastors from the pulpit, we cheapen the work and words of all women. By not listening to women pastors and leaders, we devalue the testimony and experience of our sisters, mothers and daughters. By refusing to allow women to minister to us from positions of leadership, we relegate all women to second-class citizenship in our churches. We will be blessed by the enriched ministry of the Holy Spirit through women, a liberating and uplifting, divine power no longer crippled by a church that chooses to be blind and deaf to the work and testimony of the Holy Spirit in half of its members.*—Leonard Nolt, Boise, Idaho*

While I agree with the principle of headship as expressed in "The Head of the Woman Is Man," I was disappointed that so much attention was given to the issue of the head covering, which I believe is optional for today. I believe the physical head covering to be a cultural expression of the timeless biblical principle of spiritual covering, for which God created men to provide.

I suggest that the Bible gives a unique leadership position to men in the home and church. The Scriptures paint a positive picture of gender-role differences—a picture that characterizes these differences as complementary, a picture that celebrates the God-given uniqueness of manhood and womanhood.

It is true that sin has at times marred how men and women have related to each other. Men have abused their headship by seeking to use their role for personal power and the subjugation of women. Women at times have sought to counter injustices done to them by negating any unique leadership role for men in the home and church.

All believers, whether in leadership or not, must model Christ's humility and a servant's heart. The men whom God calls to the primary leadership roles in his church must lead in modeling such attitudes. Jesus used his headship to love, serve and lay down his life for us. At the same time, he never abandoned the authority given him. Similarly, the headship to which God has entrusted men in the home and church must always be used to build up and not tear down, to release the gifts of those they serve and be a covering by facili-

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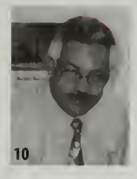
Vol. 4, No. 16, April 24, 2001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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

tating an environment of spiritual, physical and emotional safety for all.—*Jeremy Ehst, Quakertown, Pa.*

Note of appreciation

I have decided I have enough little things to warrant a note. When I saw the March 13 issue on women in leadership, I knew it would generate a variety of letters, as it has. I'm grateful you choose to publish articles even when Mennonites have varying views on them. It is essential that we continue to grapple with those issues. "What I Gave Up for Lent" (March 27) really spoke to me. While I appreciate the news pieces published, the articles speaking to the realities of living faithfully are what really stay with me. An article that I think is prophetic for U.S. Mennonites is "The Narrow Way of Jesus" (April 4). It is rare when we consider our Christian faith as something that contradicts the society around us. We need to encourage each other to keep traveling that way. We may even need to to turn around entirely.

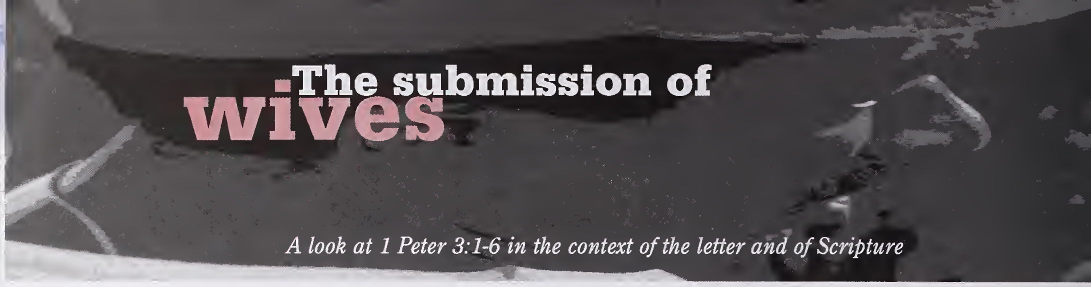
I appreciate the weekly presence of *The Mennonite.* Keep challenging and inspiring us with the Holy Spirit.—*Erin Kindy, Tiskilwa, Ill.*

Minority voice

One of the most prolific letter writers to a publication that anteceded *The Mennonite* died recently. Titus Martin submitted articles and letters to *Gospel Herald* for more than 60 years. Uncle Titus didn't always speak for me, but he spoke for many. Both his willingness to write on issues and the editors' willingness to print his letters helped ensure that minority voices in the church could speak and be heard.

Readers Say is an important part of *The Mennonite* and helps ensure that our people pick up and read the magazine.—*Luke S. Martin, Allentown, Pa.*

Cover photo by
Everett J. Thomas



The submission of wives

A look at 1 Peter 3:1-6 in the context of the letter and of Scripture

by Mary Schertz

> **Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.**
>
> *—1 Peter 3:1-2*

In 1 Peter 3:1-6, wives are told to submit to their husbands. This is a difficult text, both in what it says and in how the church has interpreted it.

As a beginning seminary professor in the late 1980s, I used 1 Peter for several years when I taught in congregations. In every case, without exception, from British Columbia to Pennsylvania and many points in between, the same thing happened. Sometime during the week or weekend, a woman came up to me and told me that this text had been used to send her or a friend of hers back to an abusive husband to "just take" his abuse. If I had ever doubted that the Mennonite church has issues of domestic abuse within its congregations, I did no longer.

But is the problem in the text or with how the text has been applied? While we might debate that argument, I would say it's both. The text is difficult. It is directed to first-century Christian women in Asia Minor who have non-Christian husbands—those who "do not obey the word" (3:1). The motivation for their submission is mission—so that these non-Christian husbands may be won to Christ. But these wives are also scared—notice the encouragement in verse 6 to let nothing terrify them. The unhappiness and fear inherent in the situation become apparent upon a close reading of the text.

Moreover, there is the odd (to modern ears) advice in the middle of the passage about braiding hair, wearing jewelry and expensive clothes. While this kind of advice might fit in the book of James, where wealth is more of an issue, it seems out of place here in 1 Peter. Finally, Sarah becomes an example of the kind of submission the writer is encouraging—and anyone who has read Genesis carefully may wonder just where it is that Sarah submits to Abraham in any way.

Legitimized oppression: The larger problem is the application. Sending a woman back to an abusive husband based on this or any other biblical text is simply wrong, and that needs to be said forthrightly. A long time ago, Willard Swartley criticized biblical interpretation that selfishly accrued power to the interpreter or legitimized oppression of any kind (*Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women*, 1982). We have been a long time—too long—learning that lesson.

What do we do with this text? Some argue for literal obedience to the injunction to submit—no matter how distasteful or dangerous. Others argue for disregard of the text because it violates our understandings of the basic equality of men and women. For me, these answers are neither viable nor adequate. As a woman of faith, a Mennonite and a biblical scholar, I am committed both to an empathetic reading of the biblical text and women's full and free participation in the delights and service of God's reign.

For me, a better answer lies in reading the command for wives to submit to husbands in the context of the entire letter of 1 Peter and reading the letter of 1 Peter in the context of the entire canon of Scripture.

A pattern in the letter: Reading the orders to submit, for both wives and slaves (2:18), in the context of the entire letter leads us to several observations. First, the theme of submission has a pattern in the letter. All Christians are to submit to human creations (usually translated "institutions") in 2:13. Slaves are to submit to masters (2:18). Wives are to submit to husbands (3:1). Finally, while "submission" is not used, all Christians are to bless instead of returning evil for evil (3:9). Second, what centers and gives meaning to this theme is the hymn about Christ in 2:21-24. The model for the encouraged behaviors is the model of the nonresistant Christ, who did not revile when he was reviled, did not threaten when he suffered but instead trusted himself to the one "who judges justly" (2:23).

Within this epistle, the slaves and the wives both become examples of Christ for the community. All Christians are to live nonresistantly as did Christ; slaves and wives are encouraged and recognized as specific models of that lifestyle for the rest of the believers.

There are some good, critical questions we can ask about the burden placed upon slaves and wives in this text. Surely the history of the interpretation of 1 Peter should alert us to the dangers of asking the most vulnerable members of a congregation to bear the greatest burdens of living nonresistantly. Nevertheless,

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even as we deal with that hard issue, we should not overlook how the text would have been read in its own time and culture. This was an era in which slaves and wives (as well as children) were commonly regarded as property, without the rights we normally associate with being human. Here, however, they are lifted up as models for the community to follow. That act alone was a radical development, emerging out of the love and concern for the value of each human being that is a part of true biblical communities.

In addition, in this era a slave or a wife were required to adhere to the same religion as the master or husband. But here is incontrovertible evidence that some early Christian communities supported the autonomy of slaves and wives in their freedom to choose their own religion. Taken together, the perception of slaves and wives as models of Christ and the assumption that they are able to choose Christian faith for themselves, 1 Peter shows itself to be a text that has its own countercultural understandings.

The whole of Scripture: Reading the text with understanding in its own literary and social context is one important aspect of biblical study. Reading the text in the context of the biblical canon is just as important. It is not any single passage that is Scripture for the church but the whole of Scripture. How does this text read in light of what else the Bible says?

It is helpful to think of the whole Bible as a tapestry. Various texts on a theme form a "thread" that contributes to the design of the whole. Some threads are background threads; others form striking, dominant or foreground patterns. Using this metaphor, the text of 1 Peter 3:1-6 contributes mainly to two parts of the design of the biblical canon. It contributes to the theme of the relationships between men and women and to the theme of nonresistant living. Because of its participation in these two themes, the biblical values by which to assess this particular passage are human creation in the image of God and redemptive love. These two values represent the foreground patterns, the larger picture, to which 1 Peter 3:1-6 contributes its threads.

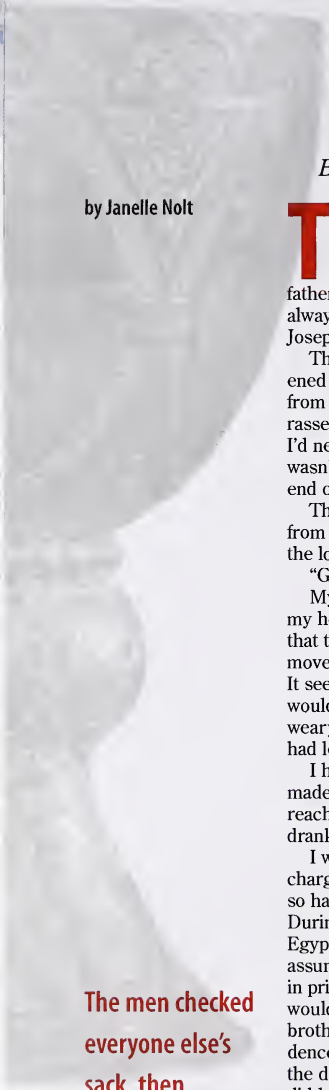
Knowing the biblical framework within which to regard a particular text is important because it provides a biblical basis by which to assess texts. In this case, we could say many things. But one kind of measurement to take is how this text measures against the vision in Genesis 1:26-27, that humans, male and female, are created in the image of God. In some ways this text resists the culture and reflects the vision of Genesis. In perceiving women and slaves as fully human and as examples, the text reflects the vision of Genesis. In supporting their independent choices about faith, the text reflects the vision of Genesis. Nevertheless, insofar as the text contributes to the continuing domination of masters and husbands, even inadvertently, it falls short of the Genesis vision.

Redemptive love: Another measurement is redemptive love. How do we assess this text in light of the redemptive love crystallized in the cross but expressed elsewhere in the biblical canon as well? Again, insofar as the text places the greatest burden for nonresistant living on the most vulnerable members of the community, it falls short of the fullest, most profound expression of redemptive love. But insofar as it calls for unity and solidarity in nonresistant living, it reflects that vision. Insofar as it calls the whole community as a community to trust themselves to the one who judges justly, it not only reflects that vision but gives us an example of how a particular people sought to practice this vision in a particular time and place.

The biblical values by which to assess this particular passage are these: human creation in the image of God and redemptive love.

Understood clearly, assessed wisely and honestly, this difficult text has its place in the tapestry of the canon and in our living interaction with the Word of God. As such it should neither be misused to justify injustice nor regarded as less than the Scripture it is.

Mary Schertz teaches New Testament at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.



The silver cup

Benjamin's story from Genesis 44-45

by Janelle Nolt

The morning sun glazed the earth with an exuberant light that filled my heart with joy. I was going home, home to see my father, home to see my friends. I was my father's pet, the favorite child, though I hadn't always been. Not when my older brother Joseph was still alive.

Though I was excited, my eyelids threatened to close. I wasn't used to being away from home. In fact, although I was embarrassed to admit it, I felt homesick. Of course, I'd never tell that to any of my 10 brothers. I wasn't that stupid. If I did, I'd never hear the end of "Benjamin is Daddy's boy."

The untimely snort of my donkey pulled me from my secluded world. I groaned, dreading the long trip home.

"Get moving, Benjamin."

My brother's voice sounded angry, so I dug my heels into my donkey, only then noticing that the donkey ahead of me had already moved on. My donkey moved, ever so slowly. It seemed even the donkey knew that this trip would drain every bit of energy that its bones, weary from years of clomping and plodding, had left.

I hated the dust. The severe drought had made everything dusty. I needed a drink. I reached for the leather sack filled with water. I drank, forgetting our limited supply.

I wondered about the mysterious man in charge of the grain in Egypt. Why did he seem so harsh one time and so kind another? During the last trip my brothers had taken to Egypt for food, why did he immediately assume they were spies and hold one of them in prison until I was brought before him? How would bringing me to Egypt prove that my brothers weren't spies? Could it be coincidence that he sat all my brothers and me at the dinner table in order of our age? Also, why did he invite us to dine with him, then give me five times more than my older brothers? Something didn't fit, but I couldn't pinpoint it.

The men checked everyone else's sack, then reached mine. They opened it, and there was the silver cup.

The pounding of hooves behind me jerked my attention toward the noise. I turned, and what I saw made my stomach flip-flop. One of Pharaoh's attendants, on a horse, raced after us and flagged us down. My donkey was only too happy to stop. The men rode up next to my oldest brother and yelled, "Off your donkeys now! The king's cup is missing. Surely you must have taken it."

My heart stopped pounding. None of my brothers would do that. A chuckle of relief rose in my throat. "If any of you is found with the cup in your sack, you'll return to Egypt and become a slave," continued the man. The men checked everyone else's sack, then reached mine. They opened it, and there was the silver cup.

My eyes stung, and when I turned to one of my brothers, I saw a look I had never seen before: fear. I felt betrayed. How dare someone do this to me? In an unsteady voice, I said, "I didn't take it."

We were then told that all of us must immediately return to Egypt, so we journeyed back together.

Once in the palace, I prepared for the worst. I was now a criminal, even though I'd done nothing more than come along to Egypt to buy food with my brothers. Yet before I could even begin my plea for mercy, Judah, one of my brothers, begged and pleaded, asking to be taken as the slave instead of me. He explained that since I was my father's favorite, I couldn't remain as a slave in Egypt, because my father vowed that death would come upon him if I didn't return.

The official ordered everyone to leave his presence except my brothers and me. I knew I was going to get it now. I'd be lucky if I still had my head when this was over.

But instead of yelling, the man wept.

My brothers and I looked at each other, confused. What was wrong with him?

When he looked at me, I saw his face twitch just like my brother Joseph's used to. He bit his lip and announced, "I'm Joseph, your brother. I've been hiding my identity from you all this time."

This news was too much. I grabbed a nearby chair to steady myself. We all looked at the man, silent.

I gathered myself and tried to speak but couldn't. This was Joseph? He looked at us and said in a shaky voice, "I was the one who saw that the silver was returned to you and ordered the cup put in Benjamin's sack."

Though I couldn't speak, my eyes shone. I wouldn't be responsible for the silver cup, and my family was complete. Suddenly, the fatigue that had held me prisoner disappeared. I was happy. My family that was held apart for so long had finally been reunited.

Janelle Nolt, 14, is a student at Manheim (Pa.) Christian Day School and a member of Erisman Mennonite Church in Manheim.

Thomasina, doubting daughter

by Jill Alexander Essbaum

Though I have chilled to glacier cold
against you these many months,
you promise you will listen to even my old
and rusted pleas. God—I flicker as a moth

to your light, straining altitude, beating
my frail, my human drivel
against you with the force of all misplaced longings
and every brittle,

sour, helpless bone. I am figless
and withered, but you say that you hunger
for me, over and above my useless
fruit. You, who in your anger

turned tables at the temple
claim to understand the awful weight
that being a simple
body bears. Or so you say.

I do not quite believe it,
yet, or if I do, it's a hidden creed that waits
on the heavy side of this mountain that
I've begged at you to master. *Contemplate*

me, oh Lord. Tonight I shine my face long
into the sky searching out the miracle
that I'm nearly sure you are, but your song
is unsung, and the clavicle

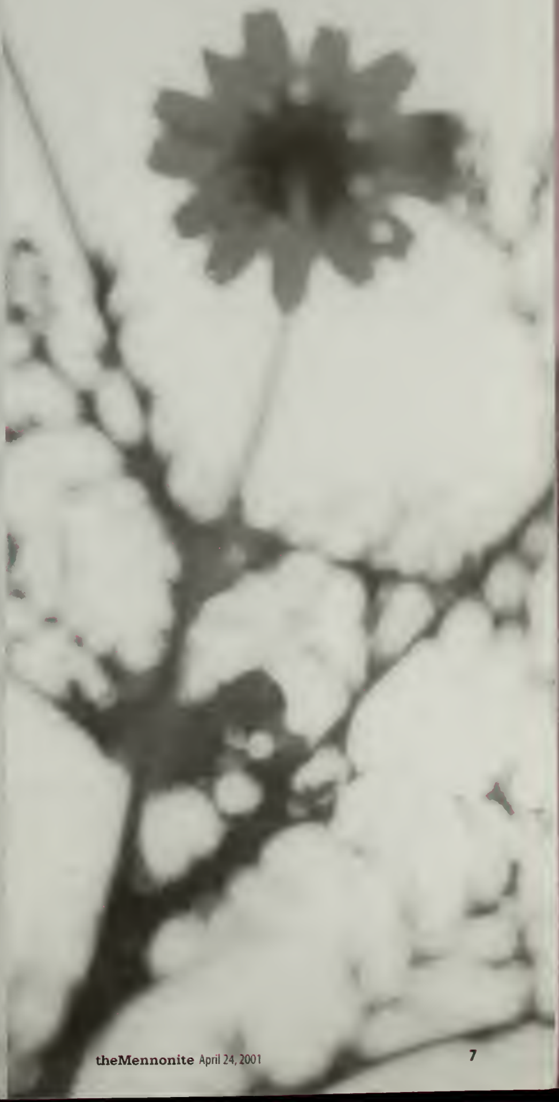
cracks at the weight of having nothing
on her shoulders. God—*am I still good*
to you? I weep for something
bold as a Christ to receive me, but the wood

of that cross has more than its share of splinters,
and praying has worn toil
to my palms. The fact is, my winter
heart doesn't root well in this soil

where you've commanded me to grow her.
Now what? I'll plant her anyway,
with what hesitant trust I have that the Sower
will claim even the funny, uncertain and mislaid

bloom I hope—at least—I will become:
a soul the size and shape of mustard's ragged seed,
but Son to shine upon it in this life and every world to come—
Christ, this wound can't heal until it bleeds.

Jill Alexander Essbaum is a free-lance writer in Austin, Texas.



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Puerto Rico leader: Conference charting separate course 'to find ourselves as a people of God'

AIBONITO, Puerto Rico—In order to develop its own identity in a Caribbean context, Puerto Rico Conference has become the first area conference to decide not to join Mennonite Church USA—at least for now.

"Our decision was not made on the basis of bad relationships or confusing information," says conference administrator Ramon Bermudez. "We need to find ourselves as a people of God."

The decision was made in February by the conference's board, administrator and pastors, following a two-year discernment process. But Bermudez says the conference may consider joining the denomination in five or 10 years, after both Puerto Rico and Mennonite Church USA have had time to develop their own identities.

Separating from the Mennonite Church will allow Puerto Rico to strengthen its own programs and decrease dependency on the North American church, Bermudez says. The conference is planning to plant two new congregations. Meanwhile its sole institution, Betania Mennonite School, near Aibonito, recently added a prekindergarten class and has seen total enrollment grow to 260 students through ninth grade.

The 12-congregation, 500-member conference wants to work with Mennonite Board of Missions to expand its mission work in the Caribbean. The conference has already sent missionaries to the Dominican Republic and is planning to send workers to Cuba and Venezuela.

"[MBM] paid some important attention to us and respected our decision," Bermudez says. "They have been telling us that MBM will work in partnership with us whether or not Puerto Rico is part of Mennonite Church USA."

Says MBM president Stanley Green: "We fully anticipate strengthening partnerships with [Puerto Rico] and are increasingly impressed with the mission vision and energy that seems to be emerging in the conference. This is an important trend in light of their decision, lest they simply become more isolated."

Bermudez says the conference will be able to devote more resources to these efforts if it does not have to spend time and money sending representatives to the continental United States for meetings.

Everett J. Thomas

Puerto Rico Conference administrator Ramon Bermudez and his secretary, Elvia Viera, in the conference office in Aibonito

Puerto Rico, a site of Mennonite mission and service work since World War II, became a Mennonite Church area conference in 1995, the same year MC and General Conference Mennonite Church delegates approved the creation of the new denomination. The transformation process has subsequently overshadowed Puerto Rico, Bermudez says.

"In a way, we did not receive the attention we hoped," he says. "At the Constituency Leaders Council, there were so many people and a big agenda. Plus many people there did not know Puerto Rico. It would have taken a year to explain Puerto Rico Conference. We cannot do that and move ahead."

The conference was also disappointed when it lost its representation on the denomination's top board when the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board was formed two years ago. Furthermore, Bermudez says, Puerto Rico chafes when North Americans assume that other Hispanics can speak for their conference.

"We were happy with the people [in the old MC structure]," he says. "But the people with whom we had relationships in the old Mennonite Church … disappeared, and those positions are now filled by people who have never been here and do not know us. They may have an open mind to us, but they don't have any experience with us."—*Everett J. Thomas*

EMU event links food and farming

Food isn't just something found on the dinner table. That is why Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., observed its first Food and Farming Week April 4-7.

"We wanted to raise awareness of the vital and often forgotten link between the food we eat and the farmers who grow it," said student planner Bethany J. Spicher. "As agribusiness goes global and the poor go hungry in developing and industrial nations, it's only through the efforts of consumers like us that the food system is going to become more just."

Events included presentations by Greg Bowman, coordinator of the Food, Faith and Farming Initiative in Souderton, Pa.; workshops on bread making, gardening and composting; tours of a local organic farm; a coffeehouse and games.

Food and Farming Week was sponsored by Earthkeepers, a campus recyling group, and the college's Peace Fellowship.

Joint U.S.-Canada executive committee grapples with publishing's financial issues

TORONTO—While steps have already been taken to address Mennonite Publishing House Inc.'s financial situation, more drastic cuts may still be coming, the agency's board chair says.

MPH Inc., combining the operations of the Mennonite Church's Mennonite Publishing House and the General Conference Mennonite Church's (GC) Faith & Life Press and Faith & Life Bookstores, is carrying an unsecured debt of $3.2 million. While other avenues are being explored, the only way to settle the debt may be to "shed some assets," Glen Hostetler told the joint executive committee of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada at its April 1 meeting in Toronto.

In a cost-cutting move last year, the former Mennonite Publishing House cut retirees' supplemental medical benefits, drawing much criticism as a result. Hostetler expressed empathy for the retirees' concerns, but said, "If MPH would have continued writing checks, they would have bounced."

Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director-designate, is in conversation with the retirees in an attempt to address their concerns.

As the only binational program agency in the new Mennonite Church, MPH Inc. reports to the joint executive committee, which meets twice a year.

Even though MPH Inc. is only three months old, the joint executive committee has already had a bump in the road of U.S.-Canada relations. Because of the former Mennonite Publishing House's debt load, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board in January acted to delay the transfer of GC assets to the new operation. That prompted concerns from Mennonite Church Canada that the U.S. board was acting unilaterally. The issue was resolved in a mid-February conference call, when the joint executive committee agreed to delay a full merger until MPH Inc.'s financial picture becomes clearer.

In addition to MPH Inc., Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., also reports to the committee. The committee approved a recommendation that current AMBS board members continue until Feb. 1, 2002, when Mennonite Church USA is expected to legally come into existence and a new AMBS board is formed. Two-thirds of the board will come from the United States and one-third from Canada.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Boards set priorities for new mission agency

NEWTON, Kan.—The new mission agency of Mennonite Church USA is eyeing a future where everything it does will be done together with congregations.

The U.S. caucus of the joint boards of the Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, meeting in Newton March 29-31, approved in principle core ministries and strategic priorities for the new agency. The adopted document sets a vision of "every congregation and all parts of the church … fully engaged in God's mission reaching from across the street to around the world" and for agency staff to be "focused not so much on providing program and resources but rather oriented toward assisting congregations to innovate their mission capacity."

The U.S. caucus of the joint boards also approved a covenant for mission collaboration between Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada. The covenant directs staff to define a relationship and practices for shared ministry.—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

Ryan Beiler

Lifting voices

Dinny and Jay Varghese and their 20-month-old son, Dylan, of Fairfax, Va., join some 120 other people in the third annual Hymnsing for Peace in Washington, D.C., on April 7. Organized by First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va., the concert drew participants from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Iowa, Virginia and West Virginia as well as from the nation's capital. They sang for an hour and a half in Lafayette Park, across from the White House. The event also included peace displays, and attendees could also sign a letter to President Bush, urging him to consider nonviolent alternatives in conflicts.

Nepal mission work a family affair

Couple's adoption changes family and ministry

BUTWAL, Nepal—Dale and Bethsaba Nafziger have been committed to their work in Nepal for many years, but now their lives and work have taken a new twist. When they adopted their daughter, Sushma, their family and ministry expanded and changed.

The Nafzigers serve under United Mission to Nepal, an umbrella organization created in 1954 after the impoverished kingdom opened its borders to the outside world. Dale has worked in the country since 1979, first with Mennonite Central Committee and now with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Dale works as a technical adviser in UMN's Development and Consulting Services. Bethsaba is a nurse and midwife. An ethnic Nepali, Bethsaba was born and raised in India and moved to Nepal after marrying Dale in 1994. Nearly 90 percent of the people in India are Hindu, but she is a fourth-generation Christian.

The Nafzigers adopted Sushma, a Nepali orphan, in October 1999. They experienced support and encouragement while they were on North American assignment from December 1999 through September 2000. The Nafzigers visited Dale's family in Pennsylvania and with many congregations across the continent. The trip to North America was a building block for the kind of cross-cultural upbringing the Nafzigers hope to provide for their daughter. They say it was important for Sushma to meet her grandparents and extended family in the United States.

The couple had worked in the capital city of Kathmandu. But when the Nafzigers returned to Nepal, they began work in Butwal, a small city about 125 miles southwest of Kathmandu, where Dale had previously worked, and are now active in a house church. One of the reasons for the move was to avoid the heavy urban pollution that would be unhealthy for Sushma as she grows.

It will also be easier for the Nafzigers to cultivate friendships and connect more with a less economically advanced community. "It's nice to be in the real Nepal," Bethsaba says. "In Kathmandu, you can get everything; the village is different."

Even before Sushma's addition to their family, Dale and Bethsaba were bringing cultures together. Their home is often a meeting place for UMN workers and Nepalis. "Our goal is to have a home where East and West meet in the best possible way," Dale says. "We have many people passing through and want all to be welcome."

MBM

Bethsaba and Dale Nafziger and their daughter, Sushma

Their native Nepali daughter has become a bridge between them and the people with whom they work. "We have become known to the locals as Sushma's mother and Sushma's father," Dale says. The family also connected with the community when they hired a local woman to help with child care.

The Nafzigers are raising their daughter to be bilingual and comfortable in both Western and Eastern cultures without feeling like she is in a fishbowl, a feeling Dale says he experiences sometimes because he is an American living in Nepal.

But this does not necessarily mean the Nafzigers hope Sushma remains in Nepal forever, Dale says. "Children are a gift from the Lord, but eventually one has to let them go their own way," he says. "We hope that when the day comes when we must let Sushma go, that she will be totally functional in both her mother's and father's cultures and thus be able to choose for herself where she feels God calling her."—*Joni Sancken of MBM News Service*

Newlyweds build marriage on service

Most volunteers in Service Opportunities for Older People (SOOP) help build and maintain houses. Anne and Harold Fast also wanted to build and maintain a new marriage.

The Fasts, of Winkler, Man., recently concluded a short-term SOOP assignment in San Antonio, Texas, where they worked at La Casa de Maria y Marta, a hostel and service program sponsored by San Antonio Mennonite Church.

"We thought it would be good to enjoy the mild weather and do something useful at the same time," says Harold. "Also, we were married seven months ago, and we're trying to have some new experiences together. Relationships like this are built on having common experiences."

SOOP is sponsored by Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee Canada.—*MBM News Service*

Health organizations honor service

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—A Virginia counseling center, a board member from a Pennsylvania mental health center and a Kansas college president were honored at the Mennonite Health Assembly, held March 22-25 in Albuquerque.

Family Life Resource Center of Harrisonburg, Va., received the Organizational Award of Merit from Mennonite Health Services (MHS). FLRC, started in 1987, offers a range of psychiatric and professional counseling services, programs and workshops. The center recently purchased a historic home in downtown Harrisonburg to provide a homelike environment for its growing programs.

Jay Oberholtzer received the Trustee of the Year Award from MHS. He recently completed 12 years on the board of Philhaven mental health facility in Mount Gretna, Pa.

Larry W. Nikkel received the Anabaptist Health Care Award from Mennonite Mutual Aid. Nikkel, president of Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan., since 1999, has held positions with MHS and Prairie View mental health facility in Newton, Kan.

The annual Mennonite Health Assembly brought together more than 400 people in health-related positions, such as nurses, physicians, counselors, congregational health promoters, chaplains, pastors, students, board members, executives and other church leaders. The four-day event included plenary sessions, workshops, worship and recreation. Featured speakers were Mackie L. Harper Norris, a nurse and consultant from Houston; Esther Lehman Kawira, a physician with Eastern Mennonite Missions in Tanzania; and George Stoltzfus, a physician and former Mennonite Church general secretary.

Preassembly sessions focused on board-executive relations and strategically positioning an organization.

During the assembly, a number of other organizations held meetings, including MHS, Mennonite Nurses Association, Mennonite Medical Association, Congregational Health Ministries, Mennonite Chaplains Association, Mennonite Association of Disability Providers and Anabaptist Mental Health Providers.

Also during the weekend, the Mennonite Church USA Transformation Team held its last meeting, concluding more than a year of work before this summer's joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in Nashville, Tenn.

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University, seminary to hold commencements

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg will hold the first commencement ceremonies of the spring 2001 graduation season.

The seminary will hold its ceremony on April 28. Ten students will receive master of arts degrees in church leadership or pastoral counseling, six will receive master of divinity degrees, and four will receive certificates in ministry studies. The commencement address will be given by June Alliman Yoder, associate professor of communication and preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

EMU will graduate a record class on April 29, with 371 students expected to receive degrees. The commencement address will be given by Indonesian Mennonite leader Charles Christano, a former president of Mennonite World Conference.

Bethel to celebrate 25 years of women's athletics

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College will commemorate women's athletics at the North Newton school on April 28, 25 years after the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference decided to sanction women's sports.

The day's activities will include presentations on the history of women's collegiate athletics, personal reflection by former Bethel players and coaches and a video scrapbook of memorable events in Bethel women's sports.

The yearlong celebration started last fall with the induction of former volleyball and track star Lisa Habegger Loganbill and the 1981 volleyball team, which finished third in the nation, into the Bethel Athletic Hall of Fame. In a February ceremony, Bethel honored the 10 women who have been named All-Americans and the 29 who have been named All-American Scholar Athletes.

MCC Great Lakes dedicates new building

KIDRON, Ohio—The Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes regional office dedicated a new facility March 31 in Kidron. The 14,610-square-foot building has a thrift store, work area for material resources and a quilting room. Plans also call for a food pantry and lunch room.

"In the past, collected materials were sent directly to Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa.," said Bill Ressler, the new building's director. "Now we plan to recycle, resell, donate, process all the materials that come in right here."

About 75 percent of the volunteers who helped with construction were Amish.

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Events

Mennonite Central Committee annual meetings, June 13-16, Akron, Pa.

Central Plains Conference annual conference, June 21-24, Milford, Neb.

Pacific Southwest Conference annual meeting, June 22-23, Pasadena, Calif.

Big Spring Mennonite Church 40th anniversary celebration, June 24. For information contact Big Spring Mennonite Church 2545 Mims Road, Luray, VA 22835; 540-743-1434; <happyvg@shentel.net>.

Workers

Bartel, Olivia, is serving as co-director of Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kan., for 2001.

Deckert, Eric, was licensed and installed Feb. 4 as pastor of Wellman (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Eicher-Miller, Heather and Kirk, Philadelphia, have begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in the Philippines, Heather as a teacher and counseling assistant, Kirk working with justice, research and advocacy.

Graber, Corbin, begins this summer as executive director of Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo. He replaces Alan Bartel.

Grasse, Chloe and Linford Martin, Calico Rock, Ark., have begun a three-year MCC assignment in El Salvador working with earthquake housing rehabilitation and agriculture.

Harvey, Jennifer, Kalona, Iowa, has begun a three-year MCC assignment in Jayapura, Indonesia, working as a peacemaking capacity builder.

Hess, Evanna, was commissioned April 1 as nurture and service minister at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Moyer, Shawn, was commissioned April 1as youth and young adult pastor at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Nisly, Deron and Krista, Hutchinson, Kan., have been named co-directors of Camp Mennoscah, Murdock, Kan.

Nolt, Robert, Metamora, Ill., begins in August as conference minister for South Central Conference.

Ostlund, James, begins June 1 as associate pastor for Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Weber, Lydia, Reinholds, Pa., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Ephrata, Pa., as clothing coordinator at the Material Resource Center.

Births

Brunk, Brielyn McKennli, March 5, to Duane and Michelle (Bartel) Brunk, Buhler, Kan.

Buckwalter, Amelie, March 13, to Steve Buckwalter and Ulrike von Fritschen, Neustadt, Germany.

Friesen, Sydney Alexandra, Feb. 5, to Mark and Stephany (Loeppky) Friesen, Altona, Man.

Harrington, Erin Faye, March 13, to Mark and Michelle (Ratzloff) Harrington, Newton, Kan.

Hollon, Claire Marin, March 21, to Bryan and Suzanne Hollon, Pasadena, Calif.

Hopkins, Morgan Ruthann, March 22, to Ruth (Taft) and Steve Hopkins, Lebanon, Ore.

Jantzi, Nathan John, Feb. 3, to Gary and Leanne Jantzi, Wellesley, Ont.

Leis, Matthew Jeffrey, Feb. 8, to Deb and Jeff Leis, Milverton, Ont.

Lohrentz Jr., Randall Mark, Feb. 22, to Norma (Kehres) and Randall Lohrentz, Buhler, Kan.

Mendenhall, Taylon Paige, March 28, to Sarah Mendenhall, Hutchinson, Kan.

Ness, Dara Brooke, Feb. 20, to Carl and Lisa (Schmidt) Ness, Harleysville, Pa.

Newton, Graham Michael, March 17, to Chris and Melissa Newton, Palmyra, Neb.

Ninomiya, Maya Morton, April 2, to Melody and Scott Morton Ninomiya, Waterloo, Ont.

Peachey, Gabe Matthew, March 31, to Dana (Brubaker) and John Peachey, Belleville, Pa.

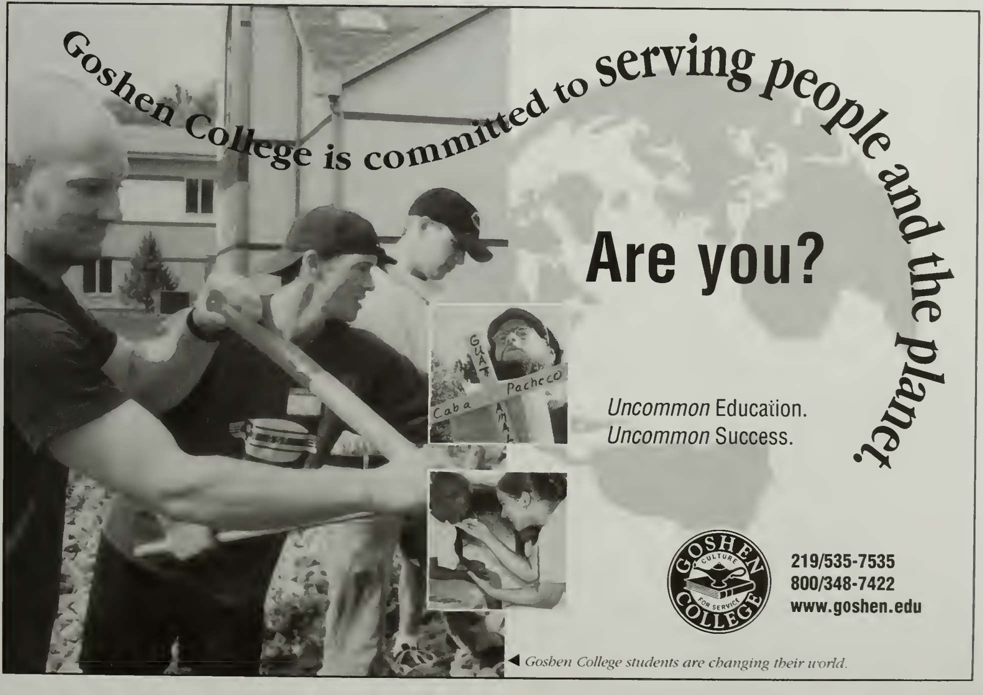
Richuber, Connor Jason, Feb. 27, to Darren and Vicki (Watkins) Richuber, Wichita, Kan.

Roth, Mason Lee, March 28, to Jodi (Erb) and Tony Roth, Milford, Neb.

Schrag, Anja Ling Li, March 28, to Tina Huang and David Schrag, Gaithersburg, Md.

Scott, Trinnity Raeven, March 26, to Robert and Teresa (Schrock) Scott, Haven, Kan.

Thomas, MacKenzie Alexis, Feb. 19, to Deb (Slagle) and Jon Thomas, Lincoln, Neb.



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Wittmer, Denver Reagan, March 23, to Shawn and Trish (Yoder) Wittmer, Hartville, Ohio.

Zacharias, Emily Paige, March 13, to Andrea (Penner) and Sheldon Zacharias, Altona, Man.

Marriages

Benner/Longacre: Darin Benner, Hatfield, Pa., and Maribeth Longacre, Telford, Pa., March 24 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Bontrager/Erickson: Melody Bontrager, Hutchinson, Kan., and Carl Erickson, Hutchinson, April 7 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Gibson/Walker: Todd Gibson, Greensburg, Pa., and Melinda Walker, Grantsville, Md., March 24.

Goshow/Michalak: LaVonne Goshow, Telford, Pa., and Shane Michalak, Souderton, Pa., March 31 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Whiten/Williams: Sherry Whiten, South Bend, Ind., and Thomas Williams, Fort Wayne, Ind., March 24 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Deaths

Bartels, Mildred Brewer, 73, Normal, Ill., died March 19 of cancer. Spouse: Junior Bartels. Parents: Millard and Lillie Brewer (deceased). Other survivors: children Bruce, Larry, Linda Chandler; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 22 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Bergey, Elizabeth, 86, Sellersville, Pa., died March 27. Parents: Jonas and Lizzie Bergey (deceased). Funeral: March 31 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Brenneman, Elsie Hitchens, 75, Plymouth, Vt., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Leland Brenneman. Parents: George and Eleanor Myers Hitchens (deceased). Memorial service: March 4 at Bethany Mennonite Church, Bridgewater Corners, Vt.

Fretz, Burton David, 61, Chevy Chase, Md., died April 5 of leukemia. Spouse: Anne Fretz. Parents: Winfield and Marguerite Fretz. Other survivors: children Nathan, Rachel. Memorial service: April 14 at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, Chevy Chase.

Gongwer, Verna Blosser, 68, Goshen, Ind., died March 18 of cancer. Spouse: Dale Gongwer. Parents: Oscar and Mabel Blosser (deceased). Other survivors: children Connie Davidhizar, Beth Fervida, Dennis, Steven, Michael; 13 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 22 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hoffman, Nora Weaver, 83, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 24. Spouse Viveron Hoffman (deceased). Parents: Henry and Liza Markley Weaver (deceased). Survivors: children Anita Yoder, Jeri Burkholder, Devon; eight grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 28 at Goshen.

Jones, Gwendolyn Hinton, 64, Fort Wayne, Ind., died March 31. Spouse: Robert Jones. Other survivors: children Douglas, Todd, Linda Rau; nine grandchildren. Funeral: April 2 at Fort Wayne.

Loewen, Jacob, 90, Altona, Man., died March 29. Spouse: Helen Loewen. Parents: Peter and Anna Loewen Loewen (deceased). Other survivors: children Frances Heinrichs, Grace Knelsen, Lloyd, Warren, Dwight, Lin; 15 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 1 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Martin, Adin, 94, Chambersburg, Pa., died March 20 of cancer. Spouse (1st): Elizabeth Witmer Martin (deceased); (2nd): Thelma Zeigler Martin. Parents: Samuel and Christiana Keener Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Harold; stepchildren Betty Stottlemyer, Doris Beyard Royer; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; four stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: March 4 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.

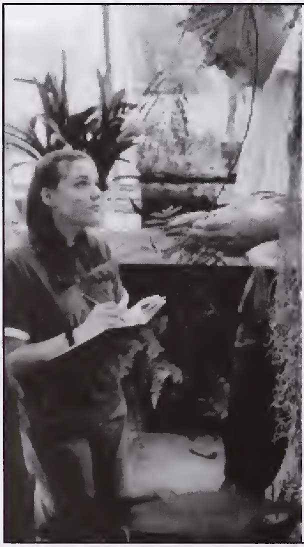
Morales, Paulino, 52, Edinburg, Texas, died Feb. 8. Spouse: Lilia Tamayo Morales. Parents: Ponciano (deceased) and Porsiria Sepulveda Morales. Other survivors: children Angela, Sheila Trevino, Paulino Jr., Tina Carranza, Esther; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Edinburg.

Nachtigal, Edna Klassen, 95, Goessel, Kan., died March 20. Spouse: Jacob Nachtigal (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Maria Dyck Klassen (deceased). Survivors: children Geneva Wedel, Franklin, Chester, Dorothy Wiens; 13 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 24 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Nester, Donald, 64, Normal, Ill., died March 16 of cancer. Spouse: Marjorie Shelly Nester. Parents: Elmer and Mabel Nester (deceased). Other survivors: children Daniel Nester-Detweiler, Darryl, Duane, Shelly Nester-King; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 21 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Ramer, Elsie Stichter, 78, Goshen, Ind., died March 27. Spouse: Walter Ramer (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Grace Stichter (deceased). Survivors: children Janet, Doris McBrier, James, Michael; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 30 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Shoup, Carol Immel, 54, Trail, Ohio, died March 27 of cancer. Spouse: Marvin Shoup. Parents: Ruby Miller Immel (deceased) and Harlan Immel. Other survivors: children Dwight, Kirsten Schlabach, Craig; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.



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- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** seeks to employ an ***administrator***, Aug. 1, 2001. Preferred credentials: teaching/administrative experience/training, M.A. Call 717-626-9551.

- **North Danvers Mennonite Church**, Danvers, Ill., is hosting its ***150th anniversary celebration***, June 15-17, 2001. Request registration forms from North Danvers Sesquicentennial Committee, RR 1 Box 67A, Danvers, IL 61732; 309-963-4554; email <rbucher@frontiernet.net>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks applicants for ***media producer*** to lead EMM's media staff, functions and projects. Experience with a wide range of communications media required.

  Contact Sherill at EMM, 717-898-2251; email <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.

  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center** is accepting applications for the following positions: ***assistant principal, middle-school teacher, teacher aide***.

  For more information, contact Ib Thomsen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology; Bible/environmental science***.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.

  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.

  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Shalom Community Church**, Ann Arbor, Mich., a Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregation in a thriving, large university setting, seeks candidates for a full-time ***pastor*** position.

  For more information or to apply, contact Search Committee, 3578 Lamplighter, Ann Arbor, MI 48103; 734-761-7366; <showalterh@aol.com>; <http://www.shalomcommunitychurch.mi.us.mennonite.net/>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for a full-time ***computer teacher/technology coordinator*** in a K-8 school of 360 students in the Akron/Canton area.

  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; email <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **The Blue Gate Restaurant** seeks ***restaurant manager***. An unusual opportunity to manage a new Amish/Mennonite-style restaurant opening this summer in Shipshewana, Ind. Candidates will have experience in large restaurant management, including scheduling, costing and menu planning. Familiarity with Amish/Mennonite cooking will be a plus. Salary range negotiable.

  Send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to Human Resources, P.O. Box 220, Shipshewana, IN 46565.

- **Raleigh Mennonite Church**, <http://rtpnet.org/~rmc>, Raleigh, N.C., a vibrant, urban congregation, invites applicants for two half-time positions: ***youth pastor*** and ***congregational peace center director***. Couples, minorities and women are especially encouraged to apply. Positions available this summer.

  Please send cover letter and resume indicating areas of interest to Raleigh Mennonite Church, Attn. Jon Friesen, P.O. Box 25545, Raleigh, NC 27611-5545; email <friesen@intrex.net>.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Fresno Pacific University Director of Elementary Education Program

Fresno Pacific University's Graduate School seeks an innovative full-time faculty member to serve as ***director of the elementary education program*** and assume leadership of coursework in reading/language arts. The director serves as a member of a collaborative teacher education team that is committed to preparing candidates to be effective teachers in classrooms with multilingual, multiethnic populations. Fresno Pacific University is rooted in the liberal arts and situated in the heart of the great central valley, serving people from a wide diversity of religious, ethnic and national traditions. The Teacher Education Division is housed in the graduate school, which offers programs in education, counseling and leadership. The graduate school is committed to offering programs that meet the needs of individuals, view both education and learners holistically and model learning in community. Faculty who teach in the credential programs collaborate regularly with faculty in the advanced credential and master's degree programs.

Responsibilities: Provide leadership to the elementary education (multiple subjects) program including program development, student advisement and university-school partnerships; teach reading/language arts methods courses required for multiple-subject candidates; mentor a cadre of master teachers and supervise field placements.

Qualifications: Earned doctorate with specialization in reading or earned doctorate in early childhood, elementary education or curriculum with a focus on literacy; ample experience teaching reading/language arts in K-8 classrooms characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity; demonstrated success and/or interest in teaching reading courses for university students; desire to work collaboratively with faculty; interest and experience in teacher research and university-public school partnerships; demonstrated leadership capabilities are all required. Experience with (a) supervision and support of beginning teachers, (b) working knowledge of a second language are desired. We are especially interested in candidates who are sensitive to the needs of the diverse population of the central valley of California and who are skillful and committed to addressing the language and cultural concerns of all students through a variety of course materials, teaching strategies, program planning and advisement.

Compensation dependent on qualifications and experience. Benefits include insurance (medical, LTD, life, dental—effective Jan. 2001), retirement (TIAA, CREF), Section 125 options and tuition remission for dependents.

Applications will be reviewed beginning April 30, 2001, and the appointment will be made as soon thereafter as a suitable candidate is secured. Fresno Pacific University in its hiring practices does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply.

Send a letter of application, a completed Faculty Application form (with related documents), three letters of references and transcripts or placement file to: Dr. Howard Loewen, Provost, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2023; fax 559-453-5502.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***associate director of development***. The associate director cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the Annual Fund goal and manages development office efforts in assigned region. Qualifications: integrity, responsibility, people skills, ability to work independently, excellent verbal and written communication skills and commitment to Hesston College, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Available July 1.

  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Email <elamp@hesston.edu> with questions. Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for the full-time position of ***admissions counselor*** to begin July 1, 2001. Represent the college to prospective students and their parents, coordinate campus visits, telecounsel and support recruitment volunteer programs. BA degree, commitment to the college's mission and Christian values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church, writing, telecommunication and speaking skills, willingness to travel. Weekend and evening work required. Related experience preferred. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer, and women and minority people are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application and resume, including three references to David Janzen, Director of Human Resources, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060; email <davidpj@goshen.edu>; fill out personnel information form at <www.goshen.edu> under employment. Application deadline is May 10 or until position is filled.

- **Ready for new opportunities** to serve others? This summer, Mennonite Central Committee needs a service program coordinator to serve in ***Florida***. MCC also needs country representatives to serve for a year, preferably longer, in ***Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania*** and ***Zambia***. Country representatives need to have worked and lived in a culture other than their own for at least a year.

  Please contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>, or the MCC office nearest you to apply for any of these five leadership positions open this summer.

- **Tel Hai Camp and Retreat** seeks ***assistant cook*** for 10-week summer camp program. This is a paid position, including room and board. Responsibilities will include preparing, cooking and serving meals for our summer camp programs. You will work together with our full-time cook. Food service experience is preferred. Summer weeks run from June 17-Aug. 25, 2001.

  For more information or to apply, please call Bruce Gregory at 610-273-3969; email <brucergreg@hotmail.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church of Christian**, Moundridge, Kan., is interviewing and receiving resumes for a ***church music director***. This part-time position involves implementing all aspects of our music ministry, directing the Chancel Choir and overseeing the other choirs and musical groups. Experience and appreciation for both contemporary and traditional music are required, and the ability to play multiple instruments is desired.

  If interested, please call 620-345-2546 and send a resume to First Mennonite Church, Box 66, Moundridge, KS 67107.

- **Jubilee Association** seeks a ***director of accounting & finance*** for growing, Mennonite-affiliated nonprofit. Supervise or perform all accounting functions: A/P, A/R, P/R; collaborate on and monitor operating budget, cash flow and investments, maintain GL, generate and analyze F/S, supervise bookkeeper, advise Exec. Dir. B.S. and 3 yrs. exp., strong PC skills. 42K, full bene. and great working environ.

  Send letter & resume to HR, Jubilee Association, 11141 Georgia Ave. #324, Wheaton, MD 20902; <hrmanager@jubileemd.org>.

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has current opportunities as follows: ***TESOL teachers*** in Albania, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lithuania, Thailand; ***MK teacher*** in Lithuania; ***public school teachers*** in Djibouti; ***community and church development*** in Guatemala and Cambodia; ***nurses*** in Cambodia; ***teachers*** of various levels and subjects in Christian schools in Kenya, Honduras, Hong Kong and Indonesia.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth and adults, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.

  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English; interest in directing musical/drama also desired. One year, full-time.

  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.

  Keyboarding and intro computer instructor: Teaching and supervising computer lab. Part- or full-time.

  Asst. boys' resident director: Youth ministry position for person with good communication and mentoring skills. Full-time, VS position.

  Head tutor: Coordinating and supporting tutoring staff; one-on-one instruction/support; interest in working with international students desired. Part- or full-time.

  Kitchen assistant: Afternoon-evening shift. Part-time.

  Coaches: Head girls' soccer, head girls' basketball, JV boys' soccer.

  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

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by Rich Preheim

Turning the church upside-down

Scotland is known for, among other things, bagpipe music. But the tune coming from the country's Presbyterian denomination is not traditional and time-honored but new and radical.

The Church of Scotland is considering revolutionary changes, including scrapping Sunday morning services as well as conventional hymns, prayers and sermons. Included in a special denominational commission's recommendations is replacing congregations with a looser concept of "communities of faith" and meetings held away from the "bricks and mortar" of church buildings.

"We are talking about turning the church upside-down," commission member Peter Neilson says in *Presbyterian Record.* "It is an overly centralized church."

The commission's report says rather than emphasizing "secondary identities of denomination and tradition," the Church of Scotland should emphasize personal and local relationships. This could mean a U-turn, with local parishes setting the agenda and being served by the denomination instead of the other way around, as many people feel.

One Church of Scotland pastor, Ron Ferguson, says the 600,000-member denomination needs a "radical reformation" if it is to serve a new generation. "What we don't need in our worship are more mindless choruses and liturgies that have all the grace and beauty of a Department of Social Security pamphlet on winter heating allowances," he says. "The challenge is to combine the best of our past with the highest quality work of contemporary writers, musicians and theologians."

God and mammon

One of the largest church fraud schemes in American history has ended with five people found guilty of a total of 72 federal counts of conspiracy, wire and mail fraud, and money laundering.

Leaders of Tampa, Fla.-based Greater Ministries ran a program assuring investors—called "gifters"—that they would double their money in about 17 months, citing Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you." Greater Ministries claimed returns came from holdings in diamond, gold and platinum mines in the United States and Africa. Instead, reports *Christianity Today,* the plan was a classic Ponzi scheme, where investors were paid with the funds of later investors.

The operation collapsed three years ago when a Colorado bank suddenly failed and its owners disappeared, causing Greater Ministries to lose almost $20 million in uninsured deposits. Distressed Greater Ministries gifters have since filed claims for losses of more than $190 million.

The five convicted Greater Ministries leaders face 25 to 190 years in prison. Two other defendants earlier pled guilty to one conspiracy count each and testified for the prosecution. The six-week trial ended last month in Tampa. Sentencing has been set for June.

Closing time

The Lord's Day will not become a shopping day in Nova Scotia any time soon, says *ChristianWeek.* The provincial government has announced that it will not change Sunday shopping rules and will not consider the issue again until at least 2005. Novia Scotia is the only province prohibiting Sunday shopping.

The reason for the decision is that the province is too divided over the issue, says Justice Minister Michael Baker. "Because there is no consensus, it is not appropriate to make any changes," he says.

Opposition to the ban is strong, according to one poll, which found that 67 percent of the province supported the idea of businesses setting their own business days. That number rose to 74 percent if employers would not force workers to work on Sundays if they had objections.

Retreat, Christian soldiers

The ongoing campaign to spread the gospel has taken a more peaceful turn. Representatives from 31 mission groups have signed a statement urging Christians not to use military-style language.

Terms such as "crusade" may offend non-Christians, and materials containing warfare terminology have been used against missionaries in foreign courts, reports *Faith Today* on the Consultation on Mission Language and Metaphors recently held at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

The statement calls Christians to find "more reconciling, redemptive words and images in Scripture and elsewhere that will aid us in expressing love, respect and effective witness for Christ rather than creating an atmosphere of adversarial confrontation." Suggested alternative terms include "inviting, sowing and reaping, fishing … [and] becoming reconcilers, peacemakers and ambassadors."

Tidbits

- Eighty-nine percent of the adult population of Nigeria attends church at least once a week.—*The Lutheran*
- Of the 20,000 participants at the Urbana 2000 student mission convention last December, 5,000 made commitments to cross-cultural mission as a vocation. —*Mission Frontiers*
- Pope John Paul II has been declared an honorary Harlem Globetrotter by team owner Mannie Jackson.—*Sojourners*
- Fifty-two percent of Church of the Nazarene congregations around the world reported membership gains.—*Holiness Today*
- The number of movies with distinct Christian themes jumped from one in 1985 to 95 in 1999. —*Pen & Sword*

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Everett J. Thomas

Puerto Rico church deserves special attention

The large majority of Mennonite Central Committee constituents ... knew little of the Island's location, geography or problems ... all were outside the horizon of our interests and concerns.—Orie O. Miller, 1952.

This is the way Miller described Mennonite perspectives on Puerto Rico in the introduction to "Serving Rural Puerto Rico" by Justus G. Holsinger (Mennonite Publishing House, 1952). But in 1943, the first Mennonite men went to Puerto Rico to fulfill their duties for Civilian Public Service. Since then, hundreds of Mennonites from mainland United States have served on the island, helping to establish congregations, schools and hospitals.

Today there is a small but vibrant conference of Mennonite congregations, mostly located in the central part of the island. In 1995, this conference decided to become part of Mennonite Church structures. However, they have now decided they will not join the new Mennonite Church USA, at least for five years (see story on page 10).

Puerto Rico deserves special attention from denominational leaders in the new Mennonite Church USA. First, as a territory, it is a part of the United States. Puerto Rican citizens are nearly evenly split about whether they should become a state or whether they should remain a commonwealth. Puerto Rican Mennonites reflect the same diversity on the issue of statehood. Nevertheless, this cluster of congregations is related to the United States in a way that is unique from any other group around the world.

In five or 10 years when our identity is better established, the Puerto Rico church may be ready to join us again, depending on what they see.

But the most important reason for giving special attention to this conference is that its leaders have clearly signaled that they are open to joining Mennonite Church USA in five or 10 years. This is an invitation to maintain relationships. In a culture where great importance is placed on personal relationships, our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters will not be ready to join Mennonite Church USA in the next decade unless they know our leaders personally and believe that we care about them enough to visit and learn about the particularities of Mennonite experience in Puerto Rico.

Miriam M. Martin, who served as a liaison to Puerto Rico for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, describes the conference as a child leaving home. "It is definitely a coming-of-age movement and could be compared to a young adult establishing [his or her] own household apart from the parents."

However, such a description may give Mennonite Church USA a bit too much credit for maturity. Both the Puerto Rico church and Mennonite Church USA can be described as teenagers. In fact, the very formation of Mennonite Church USA contributed to the hesitancy among Puerto Rican leaders.

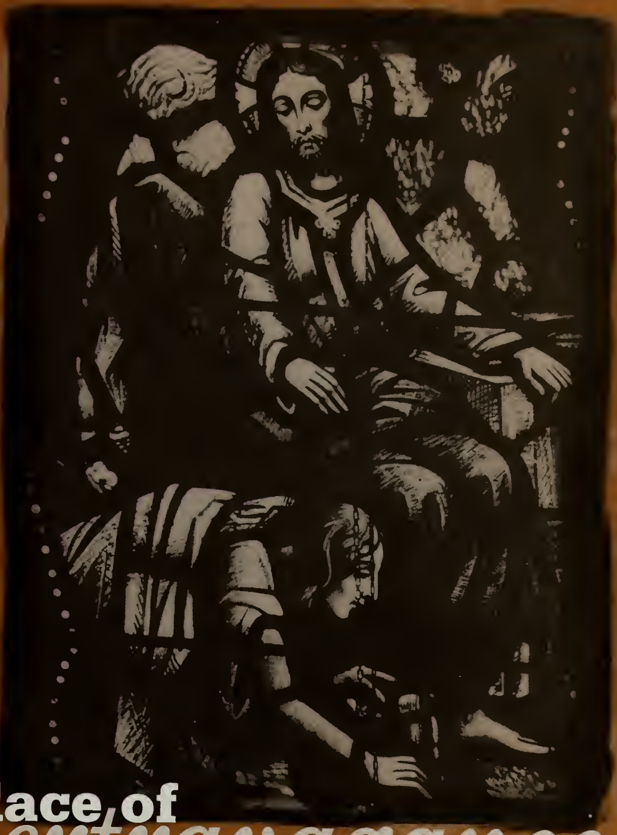
"The direction has more to do with the way the old Mennonite Church has changed," says Carlos Romero, a former leader in the Puerto Rico conference and now a vice president at Goshen (Ind.) College. "The conference is finding itself where it was before 1995 but with new experiences and a vision for the future."

Ramon Bermudez is the administrator for Puerto Rico Mennonite Conference. Several weeks ago I interviewed him in his office in Aibonito. Listening to his gracious explanations, it slowly became clear that his conference was not joining Mennonite Church USA in part because we are still in a formation process. As our denomination becomes a specifically United States church, leaders in the Puerto Rico conference become uncomfortable. Preferring to be part of a church which transcends national boundaries, this group will want to see what kind of church we become as we more closely identify with one country. In five or 10 years, when our identity is better established, the Puerto Rico church may be ready to join us again, depending on what they see.

In the meantime, it will be important to maintain relationships and to stay in touch. This unique group of 12 congregations deserves special attention from Mennonite Church USA leaders.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

May 1, 2001



the place of *extravagance*

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

A golden opportunity

Re "Plan Puts Executive Offices Coast to Coast" (April 3): As Anabaptist leaders in Philadelphia, we are quite excited about the prospect of a denominational office in our historic city. Although we have not been included in the discussions up until now, the idea seems only reasonable. Without removing central offices in the heartland, it is time to add urban offices on each coast since that is where much of the growth of the church is taking place. Urban coastal offices would give us regular opportunities for celebrating our unity in diversity across the country and across the church.

Since Philadelphia has 23 Mennonite congregations, representing more than 12 language/ethnic groups, an office here would provide for those and other urban Mennonite congregations from Boston to Washington ready access to Mennonite Church USA and vice versa. For many of the newer groups among us, such access is often difficult. Similarly, the diverse riches of these newer churches are often not readily available to the broader church. It would also provide a travel and communication hub for the Mennonite concentrations here in the East.

The new millennium and the new church provide a golden opportunity for symbolizing and realizing the new realities of God's work in our midst. We look forward to more dialogue on this inspired and timely idea.—*Freeman J. Miller, Mennonite Churches of Philadelphia*

Publishing and profits

To call retired Mennonite Publishing House employees "disgruntled" adds insult to their injury ("Publishing Has Hard Issues to Cover," March 20). How ironic that *The Mennonite*'s first report of MPH's decision to cut the supplemental medical insurance of its retirees ("Finances Delay Publishing Merger," Feb. 6) appeared in the same issue that dealt with Mennonites and unions.

If church agencies do not voluntarily keep their promises to their employees, no matter what the cost, then to whom can these retirees turn for justice, love, honesty, integrity, peaceful resolution of their differences and reverence for work and personhood ("A Mennonite View of Labor Relations," Feb. 6)? The church should compensate people who work within its agencies to publish the written word just as well as the church provides for its preachers, teachers, insurance salespeople and administrators.

While profitability is a worthy goal for our publishers, it should not be the only one. The church subsidizes most of its ministries. Should we not help our publishers so that their greatest concern is to be prophetic and pastoral rather than weighing each editorial decision on its potential for profit?—*Susan Balzer, Hesston, Kan.*

Social responsibility

What vision is guiding transformation and what vision will emerge for the future are two questions that have not yet been fully articulated. Many are familiar with Harold S. Bender's "The Anabaptist Vision." Most, however, are not likely familiar with J. Lawrence Burkholder's "The Problem of Social Responsibility from the Perspective of the Mennonite Church," written in 1958 as his doctor of theology thesis. He makes clear that his thesis covers the Mennonite Church, the denomination that through sheer numbers will dominate and control Mennonite Church USA. Although written more than 40 years ago, Burkholder's conclusions about the Mennonite Church are profoundly disturbing:

- "[I]n the 1950s … Mennonite scholars were busy articulating a sectarian ethic. … [J]ustice was given no place within the Mennonite glossary. Nonviolent resistance was considered 'unbiblical' " (page iv).
- "[N]o attempt has been made to face the problems of racial prejudice on the broader basis of social and political policy" (page 173).
- "Only with rare exception do Mennonites speak or act on social issues of the larger community unless their own religious interests are concerned" (page 175).
- The "basis of understanding with the labor movement is typical of a general unwritten and more or less unconscious agreement between Mennonites and worldly powers according to which Mennonites will do little or nothing to disturb the equilibrium of social and political forces providing they are given the privileges of living a quiet and godly life in isolation" (page 175).
- "Mennonites do nothing to influence civil rights legislation though they have community projects in the Southern states which are calculated to meet the problem of integration at the grass-roots level" (page 181).
- "The term justice lies virtually outside the Mennonite vocabulary" (page 181).

While it is true that this was written 40 years ago, when the Institute of Mennonite Studies published Burkholder's thesis in 1989, he had

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y readers say

an opportunity in his preface to update or revise his conclusions. He did not, merely noting, "I trust that this text, though dated, may yet contribute to the evolution of a mature Mennonite ethic" (page iv). There is much more, to be sure, in Burkholder's thesis. But the questions remain, when and how will Mennonite Church USA address the problem of social responsibility in today's world?—*David E. Ortman, Seattle*

Gamaliel on transformation

I appreciate the nonanxious approach Mennonite Church USA Executive Board leadership is taking regarding the upcoming vote in Nashville. I'm reminded of Gamaliel's words in Acts 5:38-39: If this movement is of human origin it will fail, but if it is from God, you will not be able to stop it. Having the privilege of working closely with the mission transformation process the last few years has convinced me that God is doing something new.—*Jim S. Amstutz, Quakertown, Pa.*

Principle and practice

Glenda Yoder's letter (Readers Say, April 3) is a vivid reminder that husbands and pastors may subscribe to certain Bible principles and relationships but violate the very essence of God's plan for men and women. We are called to be subject to one another and, most importantly, to our Head, Christ. To observe an outward practice without corresponding principles is legalistic at best. It can also become harsh and abusive. But it need not be so.

It seems to me we would do well to remember that there are those from a variety of backgrounds who find freedom and security in both the principle and the practice as understood in pertinent passages.—*David L. Miller, Partridge, Kan.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

RNS

Why all this waste?

by Lynn Miller

There are fewer things I enjoy more than traveling. Especially when I can combine travel with service. In 1991 my wife and I took a six-week sabbatical from our life in rural Ohio and visited seven countries in southern Africa and Asia. One of the last stops in the trip was Calcutta, home of Mother Teresa, City of Joy and the infamous "Black Hole."

In the three weeks we moved in and around Calcutta we saw much of normal Indian life and some extreme examples of India's well-known poverty. We saw whole families living on the sidewalks (known locally as pavement-dwellers), and though warned, we were repeatedly shocked by the sight of a horribly disfigured face at our taxi window begging for a rupee (three U.S. cents). Fortunately we also saw the love of God in the simple care given to the dying at Mother Teresa's hospice and to the hundreds of children at her orphanage, and in the dozens of Mennonite Central Committee programs offering hope and help to the needy in eastern India.

The money from this TV preacher's Rolls Royce could feed more than 500,000 people for one day, send 10,000 children to school for one year and build 5,000 shelters for people whose homes have been destroyed by the yearly flooding of the Ganges River.

After a last stop in Nepal (where half of the yearly deaths are of children who die from dysentery before they reach the age of 5), we returned to the familiar confines of our home in western Ohio. This is a house in which we can drink the water directly from the tap, eat leafy vegetables without iodine soaking and, with the push of a remote button, see several hundred TV programs proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ each week. And in God's infinite wisdom, one of the first programs we saw on our return featured a popular TV minister who, without apology, owned and drove a Rolls Royce.

"My God," I said to the TV, "what a waste!" If I had had a chance to speak to this minister I would have described the poverty we saw in Calcutta and Nepal and told him what good the $100,000 that Rolls Royce cost could have done. After all, the money from just one Rolls could feed more than 500,000 people for one day, send 10,000 children to school for one year and build 5,000 shelters for people whose homes have been destroyed by the yearly flooding of the Ganges River. But this man had chosen to spend all that potential on a luxury automobile. Why all this waste? I thought. Then I remembered that someone somewhere in the Bible had asked the same question of Jesus.

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

When the disciples saw this they were indignant. "Why all this waste?" they asked. "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

'A beautiful thing': Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her" (Matthew 26:6-13).

Wait a minute. I thought Jesus was on the side of the poor, the dispossessed, the needy. After all, it was Jesus who said in Luke 4 that he was anointed by God to proclaim the good news to the poor. What kind of good news is this, that they will be around always? And if that is true, then why is pouring expensive perfume over Jesus' head a "beautiful thing"?

Maybe the answer has less to do with the definition of waste and more with the definition of a beautiful thing. First of all, the Greek words used by Matthew to describe her action speak specifically about a particular kind of work. In fact, the literal translation would sound something like "she worked a beautiful work to me." What she did was not play; neither was it frivolous. What she did was somehow her work. And it was not insignificant or mundane work; it was beautiful, more than just "good," as some translations have it. What this woman did for Jesus was a significant task, an important job. She was preparing his body for burial, a burial that would soon be necessary because of his gift to her. So it was her ministry to him that was the beautiful thing.

But that leaves open the question of why selling the perfume and giving the money to the poor would not also have been a "beautiful work." Jesus has the answer for us. "You will not always have me." Jesus reminds them of their priorities: that he is to be worshiped, not the poor or even their work with the poor. Jesus has just told his disciples, and us, in the parable of the sheep and the goats, that whatever they did for "one of the least of these brothers of mine," they did it for him. But in his words to them after the anointing, he reminds them that he is still here and that their immediate concern is their response to his presence.

What about us? Our response to his lordship over our lives is a little less direct, for we worship the Christ who now sits on high. Jesus is no longer here in the flesh; his head is not available to be anointed. Because we have heard his command to service, many of us have found our beautiful work in our ministry to the poor. And in the midst of our service, we, like the disciples, must be reminded that our service to the poor and dispossessed is not a substitute for the worship of God.

Extravagance: Which brings us back to the changes Jesus has brought to the definition of extravagance. Make no mistake about this, the Scripture is clear about the value of the perfume in that famous alabaster vial. It was expensive perfume, and what the woman did was extravagant. But what made her act a beautiful work was not the value of the gift. Rather, it was the identity of the recipient that makes her work beautiful. The woman was extravagant on behalf of someone else, and that is the difference between "all this waste" and a "beautiful work."

The supreme model of extravagance on behalf of someone else is of course the cross of Jesus Christ. What could be more expensive than something of which there is only one? The high price of gold or diamonds exists only because of their rarity. If there was gold just lying around on the ground to be picked up, it would not be expensive at all. If there is only one of something, then it is truly priceless. Such is the case with Jesus on the cross. There is only one Son of God, only one "only begotten Son." And when God opened his alabaster jar and poured out the expensive gift of his Son at Calvary, he did it for us, for our salvation. And he did it when we least deserved it. Paul says that "while we were yet sinners" (Romans 5:8) we received that extravagant gift. This extravagance is truly a beautiful work on our behalf.

And that is what will make our extravagance a beautiful work, that it is done for someone else whether they deserve it or not. When we are extravagant to those we serve, we are doing a beautiful work. When we give more than we are asked for, we are doing a beautiful work. And when we find ways to be outrageously generous with those who have needs, no matter their own culpability in their situation, we are acting like God. This means we do not have to spend time trying to figure out whose fault this situation is or at whose feet to lay which particular sin. If we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, then we all need God's no-fault, extravagant grace.

When we give more than we are asked for, we are doing a beautiful work. And when we find ways to be outrageously generous with those who have needs, no matter their own culpability in their situation, we are acting like God.

Thank God for extravagance.

Lynn Miller works for Mennonite Mutual Aid and lives near Bluffton, Ohio.

After-Easter gift

Lessons from a duck and a dog

by Gordon Allaby

Following the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples, who were nervous about going on. They hid behind locked doors, nervous about a purge, not wanting to be crucified next. Then Jesus appeared to them and said, "Peace be with you." He showed them his hands and side, then said, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21).

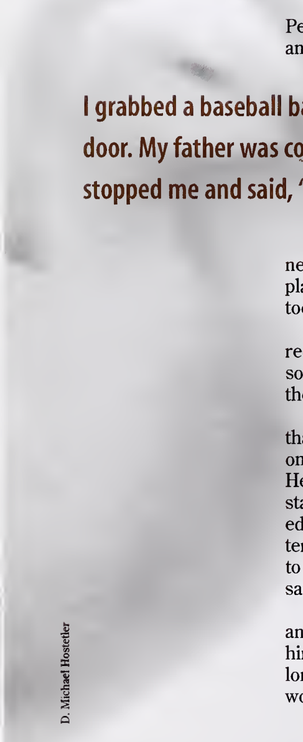
Beyond Easter is going out in peace, but what does that mean?

Back in 1967, the Saturday before Palm Sunday, my sister Carolyn returned from the shopping mall with a surprise, an Easter duckling. No one thought it would live long, but we set up a box in the kitchen. We named it Webster because it had webbed feet.

Webster the duck survived and grew. Eventually we fenced in the corner of the backyard and dug a small pond big enough for Webster to swim in.

Soon Webster was a large, white duck (a Peking variety). Peking ducks are domestic and can't fly well, which means they are vulnerable. Webster had a home and a growing place in our hearts, especially mine. We even took long walks together along busy streets.

I grabbed a baseball bat and marched toward the back door. My father was coming in as I was going out. He stopped me and said, "Let's talk."



D. Michael Hostetler

I learned that ducks make great pets. They require little care, only a swimming hole and some cracked corn as a supplement now and then.

Interestingly, a duck is a better watchdog than a dog. Webster could sense when someone approached the house in the front yard. He had different quacks for different circumstances. Each morning, when Webster detected activity in the house, he made a quick-tempo, contented quack. I guess I learned how to speak "duck." I could understand what he said, in a general sort of way.

Webster was intelligent. He knew his name and came when he was called. We often let him roam, and if he was out of sight for too long, all I had to do was call, "Webster," and he would waddle back.

Webster was special. I even entered him in a talent show. He could roll a ball back and forth with his beak. But by early fall of 1969, I was 16, and a duck just wasn't macho enough for me. So I got a dog, a black puppy with big feet. His father was a German Shepherd, his mother a Labrador. Nevertheless I protected the puppy from Webster, fearing the duck might stake his claim too aggressively.

A hazardous signal: By springtime the dog, Joe, was big, rambunctious and strong. Webster was still special, but Joe was a grand challenge that fed my ego. I enjoyed wrestling with him. I taught him that whenever I got down on my knees there were no rules, and we had a free-for-all. He leapt and attacked me, at times ripping the skin on my arms and hands, and I tussled with him. Again and again we fought that way, but as soon as I stood up, he knew it was time to stop. I was 16, full of testosterone and loved the challenge. The blood was my badge of courage. I thought I was clever—teaching him to be aggressive while on my knees. But that was a hazardous signal. He thought children were adults on their knees. Following a nearly catastrophic encounter with a child, Joe's activity was restricted to the length of a chain.

Our backyard presented an interesting contrast: Webster in his fenced-in area, nicely landscaped with a little pond, and Joe, tethered by a chain over worn-out grass. No longer could Webster roam. No longer was he the center of attention, because Joe had to be fed and walked each day. Webster could wait, I told myself. A person only has so much time.

In the wee hours of July 20, 1969, I heard Joe barking. I looked out the window and saw he was loose. I rushed outside and discovered Joe's chain leading through a freshly dug hole under the fence, then wrapped around the bird feeder post. The collar was still attached to the chain but without the dog. White feathers covered the ground. Finally I found Joe, dragged him to the house, put him in the basement and wrote a note for my parents before going back to bed. I wrote, "I think Joe got Webster. If so, good-bye Joe."

In the morning, my father saw the note and put Joe back on his chain. He searched for Webster, then saw the mangled body behind a bush. Thinking nothing could be done and in a hurry for an appointment, he left.

About an hour later, I got up and surveyed the carnage, only to discover that Webster was still alive. I called my father at work, and he

Wallowitch

rushed home. We placed Webster in a pan of water and carried him inside. We tried to clean his wounds. From tail to head, not a feather remained on his back. His raw flesh showed the cruel teeth marks from the fierce mauling he had endured. One wing was badly chewed up, and his neck was ripped open. He lay there, looking up at us with an expression that said, "You should have known."

Within a couple of minutes of our vain rescue, Webster tensed up and defiantly spread his wings for one last moment. He then gently folded them back, curled his neck around, tucked his beak under a wing and died. I sat numb for a long time while my father buried him—filling in the pond with dirt.

I was crushed with grief and vowed never to risk being hurt again by having a pet. But I did have another pet, and he was a murderer.

I grabbed a baseball bat and marched toward the back door. My father was coming in as I was going out. He stopped me and said, "Let's talk." I bellowed my response, "Joe deserves to be punished; he did an evil thing." I was correct. He killed Webster, and I was wounded.

Self-righteousness: We humans have a tendency to lash out when we've been unjustly hurt—to defend ourselves, to defend justice. With self-righteousness, we desire to expose the evil, crush it by attacking the perpetrator. That is revenge. The impetus is to make ourselves feel better. Collectively we may react with million-dollar cruise missiles. Individually the weapon of choice is often our tongue, not a baseball bat. And we believe we are right; we believe we have every right.

My father asked me to calm down, then asked, "Will beating Joe make things better?"

I said, "Then let's get rid of Joe."

My father said, "Joe is your pet, too. He did a terrible thing, but he was taught to be violent. Joe is one of God's creatures. Do you think it is possible for Joe to be taught kindness and gentleness? Is there no hope for him?"

I wanted to lash out, beat that dog, but my father told me to be at peace, forgive, befriend and be gentle to the dog. I was upset because of an act of violence. So how could I justify my own act of violence?

I looked out back and did not see a killer but a victim—a dog who was taught to be violent. Joe, with a tilted head and puzzled expression, looked back at me. My emptiness that called for justice was real, but justice is not vengeance. Justice is confronting the evil, graciously working for good and seeking to transform to peace and wholeness those engulfed with evil. That is justice. That is God's way.

God's way of peace: I can imagine how the disciples felt. Their best friend, teacher and prophet, Jesus, had been brutally killed. Out of fear and grief they were hiding and likely wishing they could get even. Then the Risen Lord confronted them. In the midst of their grief and anger, he showed them a new way. No wonder Jesus kept saying, "Peace be with you." Jesus sent the disciples sent out to teach the perpetrators the way of peace. He told them to go boldly to their enemies and teach them God's way of peace and forgiveness, the good news that Jesus overcame evil and that God is gracious.

Had I valued gentleness and peace instead of indulging my ego with macho actions, events likely would have been different.

The message of grace, peace and harmony existed before the crisis point, before the crucifixion, before Webster's death. Had I valued gentleness and peace instead of indulging my ego with macho actions, events likely would have been different. It is far better to share the way of peace before we have to put our fingers in the nail holes of experience. Too often we analyze the justification for war while in a war, instead of striving to avoid the conflict by working hard preparing fertile grounds of peace.

Joe remained a pet, and I taught him gentleness. The following spring we acquired another duck, Jasper, and they lived in harmony. Thanks to my father's message of grace, Joe lived on.

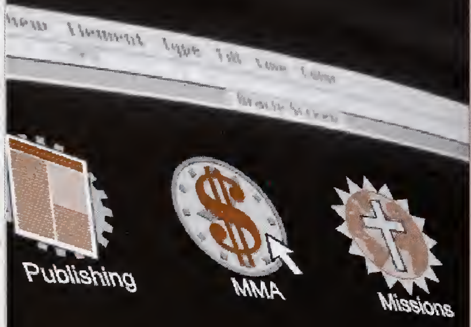
Through experience, like Thomas, I learned a valuable lesson: God confronts us with the words of Jesus, "Peace be with you, peace be with you; now go and tell others." We don't receive what we deserve. Instead we are offered forgiveness, peace and grace.

Gordon Allaby is pastor at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge, Kan.

a profile

Second in a series

Mennonite Mutual Aid



MMA photo

Congregational grants: A teacher and students help paint Mount Clare Christian School, started by Wilkens Avenue Mennonite Church, Baltimore. Five vacant row houses were initially donated for the middle school, aided by a matching MMA grant.

M M A®

Mission statement

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) seeks to lead Anabaptists toward greater practice of biblical principles of holistic stewardship.

History

- 1945: MMA founded for stewardship and mutual aid. Its first activity was making loans to workers leaving Civilian Public Service after World War II.
- 1950s-1960s: Medical and burial aid plans were created, as well as Mennonite Foundation.
- 1970s-1980s: Health insurance and retirement savings plans grew. MMA established the Sharing Fund to offer grants for congregations and educational resources.
- Early 1990s: MMA began establishing diverse financial services and increasing its stewardship investing practices.
- Late 1990s: MMA introduces new empasis for helping Anabaptists practice holistic stewardship of all God's gifts and resources.

Structure

- MMA is the proposed stewardship agency of Mennonite Church USA. It serves 25 denominations within the Mennonite and Anabaptist traditions and serves individuals, congregations, church institutions and businesses.
- MMA's groups of services are health services (health insurance for groups and individuals), financial services (mutual funds, annuities, life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability insurance and Mennonite Retirement Trust), Mennonite Foundation (charitable-giving plans), fraternal benefits (Sharing Fund grants, educational resources, disability and mental illness programs, and stewardship ministries) and trust services (a new MMA Trust Company opening this summer).
- MMA has its headquarters in Goshen, Ind., and has many field representatives around the country, including MMA counselors (who assist with insurance and financial planning), church relations managers (who work with congregations and their volunteer MMA advocates) and Mennonite Foundation representatives.

Executive officer

Howard L. Brenneman

Board members

Bruce Harder, chair, Portland, Ore.; Carol Suter, vice chair, Kansas City, Mo.; John L. Burkey, Milford, Neb.; Carol L. Duerksen, Hillsboro, Kan.; Ken Enns, Dinuba, Calif.; David Faber, Hillsboro, Kan.; Richard Friesen, Bluffton, Ohio; Brad Gabel, Pasadena, Calif.; Kathleen Grieser, Cleveland; Henry D. Landes, Sellersville, Pa.; Richard Reimer, Smithville, Ohio; Donald L. Schmidt, Newton, Kan.; Randall Snyder, Columbus, Ohio; Arlan R. Yoder, Hesston, Kan.; Gene E. Yoder, Goshen, Ind.; LaVern Yutzy, Lititz, Pa.

Financial information

Assets under management: $1.2 billion
2000 revenue: $187 million

Agency index:

- Amount in Sharing Fund grants MMA distributed in 2000: $2.3 million
- Total home-office and field staff: 270
- MMA counselors: 98
- Mennonite Foundation distributions to charities in 2000: $26.5 million

Executive Board tunes up for Nashville

Amendment decision among final acts before convention

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—After nearly two years of composing and tuning, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board is ready to let the music play when the churchwide convention takes the stage this summer in Nashville, Tenn.

In its last meeting before the convention, the board gathered April 21-22 in Kansas City to approve the final recommendations and proposals for the Nashville delegates. One action prohibits amendments to the plan of merger, which covers legal aspects, and the membership guidelines, the two central resolutions for completing the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) into Mennonite Church USA. The amendment stipulation does not limit delegate discussion.

The controversial membership guidelines have been the focus of intense study and discussion since the 1999 convention in St. Louis. "There has been so much input, so much process," said board member Lee Delp while also acknowledging that barring amendments could appear heavy-handed.

The introduction or amendment of other resolutions by delegates will be at the discretion of the convention's resolutions committee. Actions must be presented to the committee at least one session in advance of their introduction on the assembly floor and must be accompanied by the signatures of delegates of at least three MC and at least two GC area conferences, with 24 total signatures required, half from each denomination.

The board also gave further shape to the Executive Board staff and functions, approving recommendations for an Office of Administration and Finance and an Office of Cross-Cultural Emphasis, two of six offices under the Executive Board. The board earlier approved offices of Congregational Life, Communications, Ministerial Leadership and Conventions.

The Cross-Cultural Emphasis action was only a "process proposal," brought to ensure attention to be given to people of color in the church. A final proposal is scheduled to come during the next biennium.

Among issues to be determined are the role of the current MC racial/ethnic groups and staffing. The proposal calls for starting with one full-time staff member. "We settled for that, but it's not enough for us," said Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, board liaison to the denominational Hispanic groups.

The board appointed directors for four of the offices: Marlene Kropf for Congregational Life, Cynthia Snider for Communications, Ted Stuckey for Administration and Finance, and Keith Harder and Dale Stoltzfus for Ministerial Leadership. All positions start Feb. 1, 2002.

Kropf is on the staffs of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. She will take a two-year leave of absence from AMBS to start the Congregational Life office. Snider is GC communications director. Stuckey is GC business manager and treasurer. Harder is director of GC Ministerial Leadership, and Stoltzfus is minister of congregational leadership with MBCM; Harder will be full-time, and Stoltzfus half-time.

The board also heard a report on Mennonite Health Services' inquiry about becoming a denominational program agency. MHS is an inter-Mennonite association of 57 health and human-services institutions. Discussions will continue between MHS and the Executive Board.

In other business, the board:

- Approved establishing Mennonite Church USA offices in Los Angeles and Philadelphia in addition to current locations in Elkhart and Newton, Kan.
- Approved the creation of a separate board to oversee *The Mennonite.* Board members will be chosen by the Executive Board and the delegate assembly.
- Approved the slate of Executive Board nominees to the Executive Board, Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Publishing House Inc., Leadership Discernment (nominating) Committee and the education and mission agencies. Delegates will act on the nominees at Nashville.
- Heard a report that the Joint Executive Committee of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada supports the complete merger of GC assets with Mennonite Publishing House pending the results of a full audit. Because of finanical concerns, the committee had earlier approved delaying the transfer of GC fixed assets to MPH to create a merged publishing operation.—*Rich Preheim*

Georgia on church's mind for 2003

Church members are scheduled to return south of the Mason-Dixon line for the next denominational convention as Atlanta has been chosen as the location for the 2003 gathering.

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, at its April 21-22 meeting in Kansas City, Mo., approved Atlanta "subject to final contract negotiations with the convention center and hotels."

The convention would be held at the Georgia World Congress Center the first week of July 2003.

An estimated 10,000 people will be expected for the convention. That made finding a large enough venue a challenge, said conventions coordinator Steven Francisco.

"The universities that are large enough to host our events are also popular enough to host other events," he told the board. "So their costs are close to other convention [sites]."

If measures are approved at this summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn., the Atlanta gathering will be the first for Mennonite Church USA.

Poll shows contrast with federal budget

An April 16 poll conducted in part by Christian Peacemaker Teams outside a Lancaster, Pa., post office indicated increased federal support for education and less for the military.

Passersby were offered 10 pennies to deposit into 15 jars, each representing different budget lines to be funded. The education jar received 28 percent of the pennies, while the military jar received 6.3 percent. The U.S. government currently spends 33 percent of its budget on the military and 4 percent on education.

Health care was second in the poll, receiving 20 percent of the pennies, followed by 13 percent for the environment.

MCC photo by Harold Wenger

Mennonite Central Committee worker Cheryl Delaplane and United Church of Christ pastor Dandoa Chivaca (right) meet with Mozambicans displaced by flooding and now temporarily living in a camp at Mutua. MCC and the UCC provided emergency assistance to the 700 families in the camp.

Mozambique flood victims getting $340,000 worth of food, blankets, seeds, tools from MCC

MUTUA, Mozambique—A decade ago, the people of Mutua were living at the Center of Displaced People, victims of Mozambique's civil war. The fighting has long been over, but 700 families have recently returned to the camp, chased from their homes by the flooding of the Pungue River.

Mennonite Central Committee and its Mozambique partner, the United Church of Christ, are providing the families with food, blankets, used clothing, survival kits, tools and combination school/health kits worth $44,200. On April 17, a 12-member UCC team distributed 950 MCC blankets and quilts, 45 bales of used clothing, more than 400 school kits, and 95 110-pound sacks of cornmeal.

This assistance is part of the $340,000 that MCC has committed for emergency aid in Mozambique. The balance of the aid will go to the Christian Council of Mozambique to provide tools, seeds and food for people in Zambezia province recovering from earlier floods.

Flooding has affected more than 400,000 people in Mozambique this year.

In the Mutua camp, latrines are few and diseases are many, say MCC workers. Diarrhea, malaria, colds and fungus of the skin have all been reported.

As a result of some of the worst flooding in 25 years, the families arrived at the camp "homeless, shirtless and hungry," says MCC worker Cheryl Delaplane. The only promised food at the camp, outside of the MCC and church contribution, is 66 pounds of cornmeal per month provided by the World Food Program.

Nearly 80 percent of the families are headed by women. Many men work in South Africa, while others have left their families or died of illnesses such as AIDS.

The families had hoped to return to their homes after the floodwaters receded. But the Mozambique government is asking people not to go back to their land along the Pungue and instead wants them to resettle on higher ground as recent floods have been particularly bad. The government has promised the families land to build new homes and access to their old fields, where they could have small huts. Resettlement started last month.—*MCC News Service*

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CPT Hebron workers caught in cross fire

HEBRON, West Bank—Gunfire and shelling prevented three Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) workers attending an April 17 meeting in Jerusalem from returning to their apartment in Hebron that night.

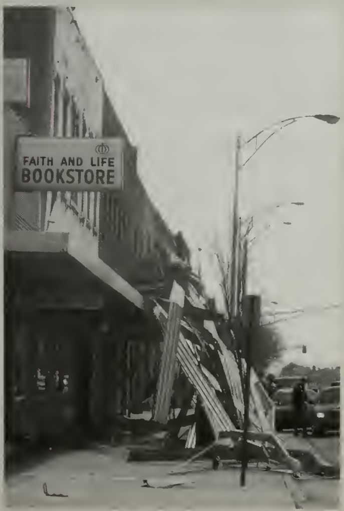
Anne Montgomery, Bob Holmes and Rick Polhemus left Jerusalem about 6:30 p.m. Israeli soldiers had closed a road near Beit Jala, delaying them as well as other travelers. The CPT workers' taxi was allowed through several hours later, about 10:15 p.m., and arrived in central Hebron. But more gunfire there kept them from proceeding to their apartment, and they spent the night with a friend who lives outside of Hebron's old city.

While waiting outside Hebron, the CPT workers visited with a resident who runs a gift shop in Jerusalem. He said that the shooting usually lets up most nights around 10.

"This was just one night for us," says Polhemus. "I was thinking of that shop owner and all the nights he's left Jerusalem at 6 and not gotten home until after 11."

The next day Holmes and fellow CPT worker Greg Rollins were arrested, along with 14 other people, while dismantling a roadblock erected by the Israeli army outside two Palestinian villages. They were released several hours later after they refused to sign a statement promising not to return to the area.

Among those arrested were six Israelis, two Palestinians and people from Italy, France, Sweden, Canada and the United States.—*CPT News Service*



GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Like chaff before the wind

Sustained winds of about 40 miles an hour and gusts in excess of 60 miles an hour on April 11 took their toll on the General Conference Mennonite Church headquarters in Newton, Kan., tearing off the siding on the front of the building.

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Hesston College to graduate 166 on May 6

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College Bible instructor Michele Hershberger will give the school's commencement address as 166 students are expected to graduate on May 6.

Other commencement weekend activities will include the nurses' pinning ceremony and Pastoral Ministries commissioning service on May 5. The theater department will present *Fiddler on the Roof* May 3-5, and the annual Larkfest, which recognizes the sophomore class's achievements, will be May 5.

AMBS student wins peace essay contest

RICHMOND, Ind.—John David Thacker, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., won first place in a a historic peace church essay contest. He will receive $1,000 for his submission, "Peace Churches in the 21st Century: Racism and the Abounding Grace."

Thacker's entry was judged the best in the Historic Peace Church Essay/Sermon Contest for Peace Church Seminarians. The contest is administered by the Church of the Brethren's Bethany Theological Seminary in Richmond and is open to any member of the Mennonite, Church of the Brethren and Society of Friends denominations who is a student at a historic peace church seminary or graduate program.

Second place and $500 was awarded to Bethany student Matthew J. Smucker, while third place went to Benyamin S. Utomo of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif.

this date in Mennonite history

May 1, 1965—Eastern District Conference adopts a resolution encouraging the General Conference Mennonite Church to pursue "union" with the Mennonite Church.

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Events

North Danvers Mennonite Church 150th anniversary celebration, June 15-17, 2001, Danvers, Ill. For information contact Sesquicentennial Committee, RR 1 Box 67A, Danvers, IL 61732; 309-963-4554; email <rbucher@frontiernet.net>.

Births

Dayton, Brody Parker Beiler, March 23, to John and Lori (Beiler) Dayton, Blooming Glen, Pa.

Fellenbaum, Natalie LeAnn, March 3, to Dorcas and Randall Fellenbaum, Mount Joy, Pa.

Hess, Jessica Erin, March 20, to Dale and Rebecca (Copeland) Hess, Harrisonburg, Va.

Loucks, Kailyn May, March 19, to DeNay (Smith) and Mark Loucks, Great Bend, Kan.

Mininger, Brooklyn Dawn, April 3, to Nolan and Vanessa (Unruh) Mininger, Greeley, Colo.

Marriages

Davis/Williams: Wendy Davis, Orrville, Ohio, and Alex Williams, Orangeburg, S.C., March 16 at Orangeburg.

Voll/Yoder: Joshua Voll, Archbold, Ohio, and Elizabeth Yoder, Archbold, March 31 at St. John's United Church of Christ, Archbold.

classifieds

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, near Lancaster, Pa., is accepting applications for some ***elementary teaching openings***.
  Contact Dave Helmus, Principal, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; 717-394-7107; email <daveh@lgms.pvt.k12.pa.us7>.

- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible. For information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director***, with some worship planning responsibilities.
  Send resume by June 15 to Senior Pastor, Maplewood Mennonite Church, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Rural Idaho community health center** needs ***family practitioners*** with OB to serve uninsured. Three Mennonite doctors on staff of six. Spanish helps.
  Call Mark Mering, M.D., 208-342-2405, or email <mmering@trhs.org>.

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  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities. Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***associate director of development***. The associate director cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the Annual Fund goal and manages development office efforts in assigned region. Qualifications: integrity, responsibility, people skills, ability to work independently, excellent verbal and written communication skills and commitment to Hesston College, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Available July 1.
  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Email <elamp@hesston.edu> with questions. Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

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- **Ready for new opportunities** to serve others? This summer, Mennonite Central Committee needs a service program coordinator to serve in ***Florida***. MCC also needs country representatives to serve for a year, preferably longer, in ***Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania*** and ***Zambia***. Country representatives need to have worked and lived in a culture other than their own for at least a year. Please contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>, or the MCC office nearest you to apply for any of these five leadership positions open this summer.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted camp ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church, seeks ministry-minded person to serve as ***maintenance technician*** on buildings & grounds team, responsible for upkeep and development of Spruce Lake's property, plant and equipment. Applicant should have experience/training in building- and/or grounds keeping-related tasks. Salary and liberal benefits package. Optional on-campus housing. Open immediately

  . Send resume to Executive Director, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology; Bible/environmental science***. Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***administrative assistant to the executive vice president for advancement***. Responsibilities: provide support for the executive vice president for advancement, use of institutional computer systems including the AS 400, supervise development support staff and general department management, coordinator major departmental printing with the director of communications, coordinate all departmental mailings. Preferred qualities and qualifications: competence with computers, databases and file management, initiative, organizational and relational skills, ability to work independently and delegate as appropriate, and commitment to Mennonite higher education. Available May 1. Full-time, 12-month position.

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Following 'Fake Latinos'

by Tobin Miller Shearer

Following "Fake Latinos" (*The Mennonite*, Jan. 9), my brain felt like it had split in two. Depending on whether I was listening closer any given moment to the dismissal or defense, I either felt completely condemned or absolutely embraced. There seemed to be little in between.

On the side of dismissal, one letter claimed the article was the "silliest and worst written ever to have appeared in the pages of *The Mennonite*." Another called it "condescending." One caller expressed concerned about my "spiritual condition."

A friend told me how his neighbor slammed the article down on his kitchen cabinet and spent long hours demanding an explanation, insisting that I, the author, had no integrity in writing about an experience I never had. When my friend pointed out that I was writing about an experience that in fact I had had, that of listening to returning missionaries and other white people talk about themselves, his neighbor dismissed the observation as irrelevant.

Cheryl, my wife, listened to me process each response. After a few days she said, "Tobin, you touched a sacred cow. What do you expect?"

"That everyone agree with me," I said. She laughed. Even though I knew she was right, a wheedling voice inside my brain would not be quiet: "You caused this. Why didn't you say it nicer?"

Then Cheryl reminded me that others had also spoken. A Latino colleague told me, "You wrote an excellent article, particularly because it is true. You'll also get in trouble." This same colleague heard his wife ask, "What do you mean by fake Latinos?" She then answered her own question with an accurate description of the phenomena of white returning missionaries taking on the identities of those with whom they served. Although she had not yet read what I had written, she could have penned the same article.

Too dangerous: But it would have been too risky. An African-American colleague, upon hearing of another personal attack, put it bluntly, "You were naive if you thought this wouldn't happen. A person of color simply could not have written that article. It would be too dangerous."

His words jolted me into remembering the reason for the bifurcation of my brain.

We live in different worlds in this church. There is a white world, where we can pick and choose where we will travel, whom we will serve and under which terms. Whether missionaries, ministers or musicians, we can also choose, apparently without censure, whom we will become.

Parallel to this world of privilege and unconscious proclamation of innocence is a world populated by people of color who cannot choose in the same way where to travel, whom to serve and how to describe the terms of engagement. It is a world that watches and, most often, remains silent while we white people trample all around. To speak up, as have many of my colleagues of color with great and unquenchable courage, is to be censured, ridiculed and written off. The Mennonite church has done so regularly in its not so distant past up to the trembling present.

Following "Fake Latinos," I remembered it again. We who are white and we who are people of color live different lives. That is not as it should be. It is, however, the world that racism has helped shape.

We who are white and we who are people of color live different lives. That is not as it should be. It is, however, the world that racism has helped shape.

Within that world, listening deeply is a spiritual discipline I have yet to master. When I am able to listen to the nudging of God's presence, I am forced to consider those parts of myself I would rather not examine.

Cultural identities: I am left wondering about us who are white. How have we been wounded by our privileges? Have they cut us off from God? Have we traded in specific cultural identities for access to privilege? Has this made us susceptible to cloaking ourselves in others' cultures? Do we need to listen? Are people of color telling us, We want to know you as you are, not who you pretend to be?

I don't know all the answers. I do think we need to listen.

I am reminded of the couple who sat with me at supper over stuffed shells and pasta sauce at a wintry New York retreat center. They asked me gently if I had been surprised by the responses to this article. They listened to me describe the warp and woof of my muddlings. They told me simply, "You should know that we are listening."

That is the response I want to remember. Not that I had written a condescending article reeking of spiritual disease, not even that my most trusted friends of color supported me so wholeheartedly. I only wanted to write down that one good sentence. Following "Fake Latinos," a white couple from the New York countryside told me that they listened.

Tobin Miller Shearer lives in Lancaster, Pa.

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Everett J. Thomas

Managing our wealth

At the beginning of the formation process for Mennonite Church USA, there seemed to be some uncertainty about whether Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) would be included in the list of agencies for the new church. However, this "stewardship solutions" agency is now expected to join publishing, missions and schooling as a denominational program.

In many ways, this is a critical agency for the new church. We are so wealthy as a people that we must have a denominational agency devoted to providing stewardship education and to helping us manage our money.

In 1991, MMA had $300 million of church members' money under management. This year MMA is managing $1.2 billion. Howard Brenneman, president and CEO, calculates that even with this growth MMA is reaching less than 20 percent of the Anabaptist and Mennonite "market" in the United States.

MMA should be a part of the new church structures for several reasons. First, as the wealthiest denomination in the Mennonite world family, we need a large and powerful agency to provide provocative stewardship education and credible financial services.

> **We are so wealthy as a people that we must have a denominational agency devoted to providing stewardship education and to helping us manage our money.**

Second, this agency has developed an important connection to the grass roots in Mennonite congregations; currently there are 940 MMA advocates in the 1,063 congregations that may become part of the new church. Feedback from these congregational members shapes the organization's values and culture. In turn, these lay folks are at the center of a powerful incentive system. MMA uses profits from its operations to reward congregations that address financial needs within their groups and in their neighborhoods. Last year this amounted to $2.4 million in matching funds for congregations that spent an additional $4.7 million on such needs.

Third, MMA has changed dramatically in the past decade. Ten years ago MMA was primarily an insurance company. Now it is primarily a financial services company providing theological leadership for stewardship practices. For example, the Mennonite Foundation (one of seven corporations under the MMA umbrella) saw $6.7 million pass through its books in 1991. Last year approximately $26.7 million was distributed for members who use this service as a conduit for their benevolences.

Fourth, MMA is so large and powerful that the church needs some way to hold it accountable. MMA leaders are among the first to ask for this accountability. An incident several years ago demonstrates the need for such accountability. During the national debate on universal health care, MMA lobbied government representatives for a position that was opposite the position held by the staff in Mennonite Central Committee's Washington Office. Government officials rightly were exasperated, asking which point of view represented Mennonite convictions. If MMA were to be an independent agency, the denomination would have no way of entering into a conversation about such difficult issues.

Fifth, MMA will contribute an ecumenical voice to the new church. Although it will be primarily accountable to Mennonite Church USA, this organization is building bridges to 24 other Anabaptist groups in the United States. Undoubtedly there will be times when the theology and practices of these groups differ from ours. But it is in the working out of such differences that the new denomination can create common ground with those who are our theological cousins.

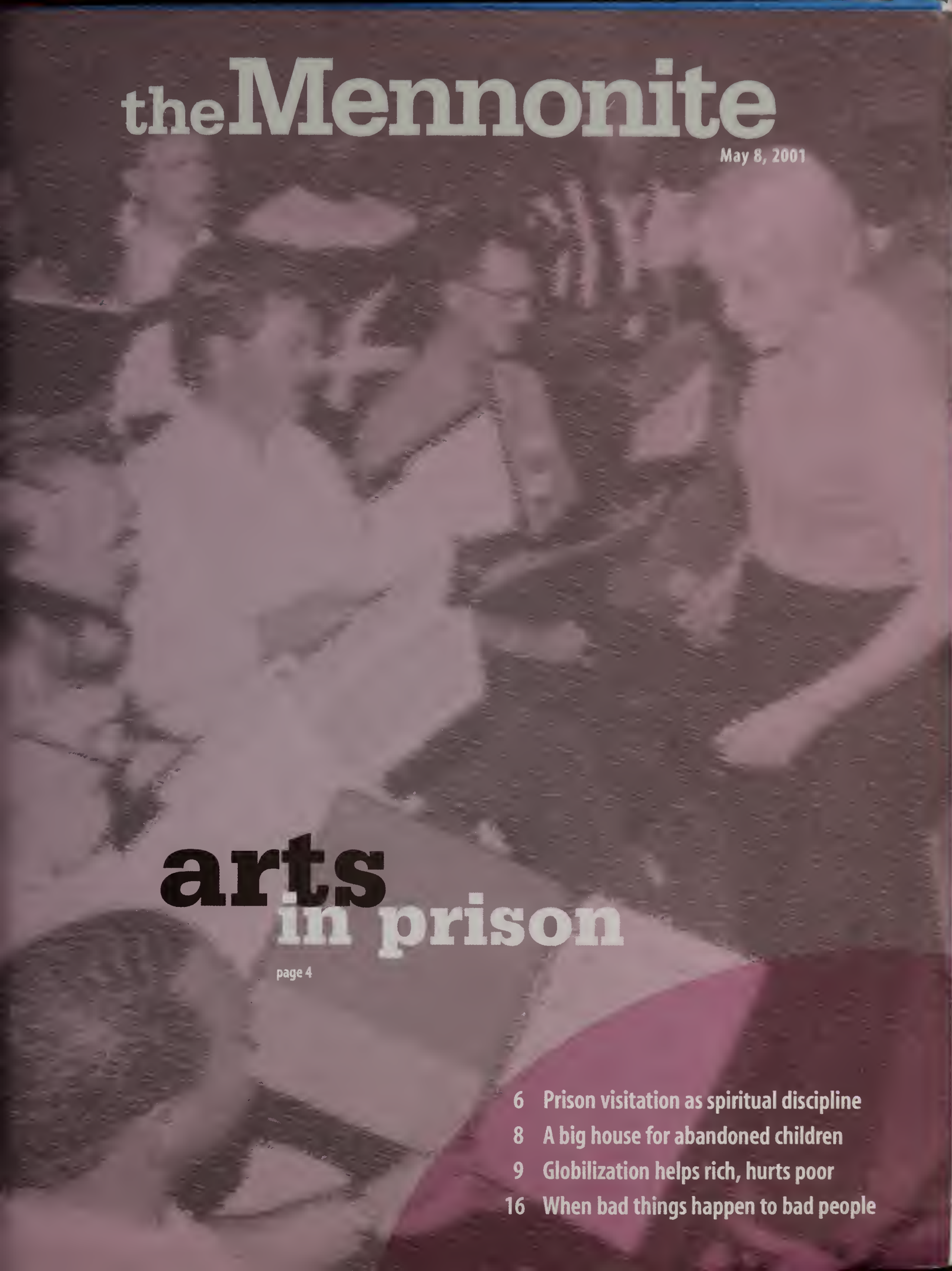
Some may be skeptical of such a large church business being given status as a denominational agency. After all, other Mennonite-related financial service and insurance companies will not be granted such a special place in the new denomination.

But the bottom line is that Mennonite Church USA needs an influential organization such as MMA to challenge us in our stewardship practices and to provide credible financial services. MMA has reinvented itself and is now positioned to provide stewardship leadership for the new church. Considering our wealth, we certainly need solutions.—*ejt*

Editor's note: This is the second in a series that profiles agencies being formed for the new Mennonite Church USA. Mennonite Mutual Aid is profiled on page 8.

the Mennonite

May 8, 2001



arts in prison

page 4

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8 A big house for abandoned children
9 Globilization helps rich, hurts poor
16 When bad things happen to bad people

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Environmental friendliness

I just visited the website <www.rprogress.org> recommended by Gordon Houser in his Mediaculture column (April 17). The website has a series of 13 questions to answer in order to calculate one's "ecological footprint." What an eye-opening experience. I have prided myself on my earth/environment-friendly ways, but the old adage is true: Pride goes before a fall. Kudos for including such a stimulating suggestion on remembering that God placed humans here on this planet as stewards, not as mindless, greedy consumers.—*Erica Collins, Todd, N.C.*

Thank you for writing about the environment and wastefulness of our country. Are we as concerned about the environment in countries where we get our oil and gas as we are in our own United States?—*Vernice Bixler, Sterling, Ohio*

Celebrative interpretation

Mary Schertz serves up a wonderful interpretation of 1 Peter 3:1-6 ("The Submission of Wives," April 24) for me to celebrate gratefully:

1. It is a model of biblical interpretation, of how to read the Bible christologically and contextually.
2. Freedom and responsibility are forged together by love, inseparably linked.
3. It leaves me with the highest spiritual work of active, radical, transforming submission which is utterly beyond obedience and conformity.
4. It risks being misused to permit domination and subjugation in order to stay anchored in love rather than to become another "law-full" admonition in the service of obedience and conformity.
5. It is rich with implications for how to read and honor our doctrinal handbook, Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.
6. I eagerly want to be a disciple of Jesus along with the author of Peter—and with Mary Schertz.—*Walter S. Friesen, Newton, Kan.*

Poetic understanding

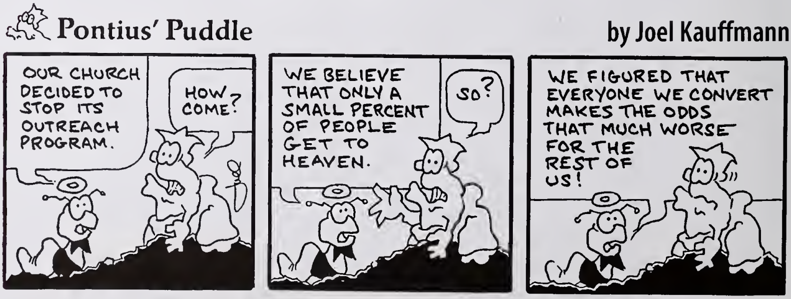
Thank you for the poem by Ann Hostetler titled "Imperfect Servant" (April 3). It spoke in a profound way to my life experience and understanding of Jesus. The lines "Give up perfection for one day" and "keep walking till you face your deepest failures" expressed for me a depth of faith in language I could understand. I found it useful as liturgy and in connection with the sermon used the Sunday after Easter, taken from John 20:19-31.—*Wesley Mast, Bethlehem, Pa.*

Grace plus justice and obedience

We are women involved in various aspects of ministry, responding to the articles in the March 13 issue related to women in ministry. The editorial asks us to consider the concept of grace as we ponder and act about this issue —grace to let some congregations choose women as leaders and grace to let other congregations deny leadership positions to women. It is tempting to say a resounding yes to this option. But when we think of our sisters struggling to answer God's call in their lives who happen to live in areas or situations different from our own, the question becomes, "Grace for whom?" Certainly not the many gifted and called women in those congregations which deny them the use of those gifts. Certainly not the girls growing up in those congregations who won't have the opportunity to be supported and nurtured to become leaders in our church. How do we claim grace for them?

We agree that through God's grace we can

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**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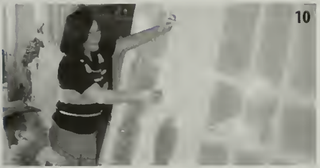
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y readers say

live, worship and grow with those with whom we do not always agree. In fact, that is exactly what God calls us to do. But alongside the concept of grace we would like to add two other important concepts: justice and obedience. God calls us to an understanding of justice that is different from the the justice of courts or society. And as Mennonites, we have long held that God's call and claim on our lives is more important than any word from government or other human source. Obedience to the will and word of God is the highest call in our lives. All of us are called to use our gifts and talents, our efforts, energy and imaginations to whatever it is that God asks of us. Far too many women have turned their backs—either temporarily or permanently—on God's call in their lives because of societal or denominational pressure. As a denomination, as congregations, as individuals we should be encouraging all those who hear God's call to pastoral ministry to obey.

As we continue to struggle with this issue, may we do so with hearts and minds that are open to hear the word of God in each of our lives, to be transformed by true grace and to be led by our desire for justice and obedience in our common journey with Christ.—*Muriel Stackley, Pawnee Rock, Kan.; Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Topeka, Kan.; Vicki Penner, Lawrence, Kan.; Louise Wideman, Hesston, Kan.; Edna Kruger Dyck, Newton, Kan.; Dorothea Janzen, North Newton, Kan.; LaVerle Schrag, Hutchinson, Kan.; Kathy Goering, McPherson, Kan.; Melanie Zuercher, Hesston, Kan.; Leah Oxley Harness, Newton, Kan.; Eleanor Beachy, Hesston, Kan.; Ann Showalter, Hesston, Kan.; Norma J. Johnson, Newton, Kan.; Debbie Schmidt, Newton, Kan.; Carol Rose, Wichita, Kan.; Beverly Baumgartner, Hesston, Kan.; Susan Charest Wickiser, Wichita, Kan.*

Cover photo by Arts in Prison

Arts in prison

by Elvera Voth with Christopher Kurtz

Elvera Voth looks at the group of men standing around the piano. "That sounds good. I think we've spent at least half our rehearsal time on this one piece, 'Lone Wild Bird.' It's time to sing something else."

An older man, his deep facial lines attesting to years of hard living, doesn't look up from his song sheet. "Yes, ma'am. But I'm just wondering if we could maybe sing that one more time."

The men are prisoners, maximum-security inmates at the Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF), the oldest and—with nearly 2,500 inmates—the largest state prison in Kansas. Elvera, who grew up on a wheat farm in central Kansas, is retired from years of conducting choruses and operas in Alaska, where she founded the University of Alaska-Anchorage Department of Music, the Alaska Chamber Singers and the Anchorage Opera. Now she and these convicts are working to mold Elvera's latest endeavor, the West Wall Singers, into a satisfying men's ensemble.

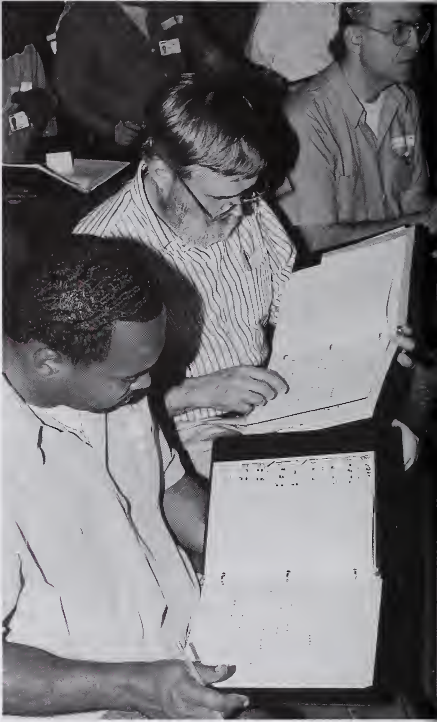
Elvera founded the East Hill Singers, a chorus of Kansas City volunteers and LCF minimum-security inmates, in 1995, then Arts in Prison Inc. in 1998. Here she shares her thoughts about using the creative arts as a tool of healing within prison walls.

Can you imagine what a standing ovation felt like after being told all your life that you can't do anything right?

—An inmate member of the East Hill Singers

An audience member at a recent East Hill Singers concert said, "Creativity is the lifeblood of our souls. We need a chance to express and feel, or we shrivel and die."

Where is such lifeblood needed more than in prison, where the spirits of nearly 2 million of our neighbors are shriveling and dying? The maximum-security unit at Lansing Correctional Facility (LCF) is surrounded by walls of stone, razor wire and guard towers mounted above gated living units. I marvel at how the inmates I meet continue to function in their everyday lives and how they are so pleasant and polite as they come together to sing when just outside our meeting place are iron bars, guards and the clanking sounds of cold isolation. Arts in Prison Inc. is finding ways to nurture these men in the midst of such desolate surroundings.



God-given talents: A volunteer and inmate practice singing.

I am fed by the inmates' hunger for what I have the privilege of being able to offer—a chance for them to sing with other men and to create a communal bond that many have never before experienced, a chance to work toward and experience the rewards of reaching a long-term goal with each other.

Said one inmate member of the East Hill Singers, "Can you imagine what a standing ovation felt like after being told all your life that you can't do anything right?" I consider bringing music inside the walls to be a ministry of healing, a ministry of hope. Learning to sing quietly and beautifully together touches a place deep inside these men, a place that perhaps has never before been reached. I believe this can bring a new light to feelings of remorse and guilt, feelings that can lead to redemption and to becoming new in spirit.

Arts in Prison Inc. has found inmates hungry not only for music but also for other venues for creative and personal growth. One member of a creative writing class wrote of the "perpetual monster that has arrived at my family's doorstep," the cycle of incarceration that is taking place in his family. Another wrote of a dream that ended with him running from white strangers brandishing weapons into the arms of his own people, his protector calling

Learning to sing quietly and beautifully together touches a place deep inside these men, a place that perhaps has never before been reached. I believe this can bring a new light to feelings of remorse and guilt, feelings that can lead to redemption and to becoming new in spirit.

for "Colored people! Colored people! Colored people!"

"More, more, more!" wrote one inmate after performing in a play with the drama workshop. A watercolor painting shows a sleeping daughter. A colored pencil portrait depicts Christ's face as he is crucified. A guitar student said, "When I'm in this class, I get my own creative thoughts on the guitar, my own language with the guitar." A gardening student said, "It takes commitment to plant something and care for it, to see it bloom and be able to say, 'I planted that. Look at this.' "

I nearly always try to take someone with me whenever I enter the prison for West Wall Singers rehearsals; otherwise, my fervor dwindles and my spirit begins to shrink beneath the heaviness in the air. And I get to leave. Before I even step into the sally port prison entrance, through the series of locked metal doors, I know that when the evening is over I can go back to my condo in the middle of suburbia, back to my cozy home with an automatic garage door opener and friendly neighbors. The inmates go back to their cells. I won the lottery of life; they didn't. As simple as that.

Working in the prison has prompted me to question the meaning of loving my neighbor, of being part of a faith community whose highest calling is to minister to the disenfranchised, the forgotten, the undervalued. How can we in the Mennonite church enlarge our commitment to meeting the needs of this silent ever-growing population among us? How can we best remember that the people we sometimes see through the fences are real-life brothers and sisters with God-given talents that, left untended, will shrivel and die?

Many of these people will return to our communities someday. As our new neighbors, will they have hope in their hearts or hatred in their eyes?

Elvera Voth, a retired choral conductor and educator in the Midwest and Alaska, has been a volunteer at Lansing Correctional Facility since 1995. Christopher Kurtz is working with Arts in Prison Inc. through Mennonite Voluntary Service.

Arts in Prison photo

Loving my neighbor: Elvera Voth helps inmates and volunteers practice singing.

Working in the prison has prompted me to question the meaning of loving my neighbor, of being part of a faith community whose highest calling is to minister to the disenfranchised, the forgotten, the undervalued.

Prison visitation as spiritual discipline

Lessons from befriending an inmate

by Jim S. Amstutz

I knew intuitively that it was the right thing to do. When Jason lost his work release privileges and was sent back to lock-up, I was prepared to serve as his spiritual adviser. But it took me four months of visiting every other week to realize the benefits for both of us as a spiritual discipline. I needed to see Jason.

Initially Jason came into the life of our congregation asking to do 15 hours of community service for a minor offense that occurred in our county. He drove by our church building on his way to work and was told that a church would be an acceptable place to do his required service. After contacting his probation officer and checking with a few leadership people at church, it was approved.

I supervised his volunteer work and even took Jason with our family to do some volunteer work at the Mennonite elementary school our children attend. He did exemplary work, and I wrote a positive report to his probation officer. I assumed that was the end of our relationship.

A year later I noticed Jason's name in the paper. He was found guilty of a much more serious crime involving a weapon, underage drinking and the injury of another teenager. He was being held in the county prison pending his sentencing the following month. "Is this our Jason?" I asked my wife as I read the article a second and third time. The address, age and location of the incident seemed to indicate it was. But I had to know for sure.

I called the prison to find out how to go about making a visit. I arrived and followed the normal procedures to talk with an inmate by phone behind the bullet-proof glass. It was Jason. He told me what happened the night of the incident and that he was being held in the violent pod in county lock-up because a weapon was involved and someone was injured. My mind raced with horrible thoughts of a young 18-year-old housed with hardened criminals. So far Jason had been spared from any physical harm or abuse.

What began as a journey of biblical oughtness and altruism matured into a journey toward holiness.

I attended his sentencing with a neighbor of Jason's who attends our church. "Jason had his first paying job with us," Diane said. "He was a good worker."

Without compensation: I met Jason's mother and his fiancee, Tonya, who was pregnant with Jason's child. The judge lectured Jason and gave him the maximum sentence, just short of sending him to the state system. He then determined that after some additional time in county prison plus time served he could participate in work release. He specified a placement under the supervision of the area council of churches and that he would do his work without compensation.

That allowed Jason to attend church; he and his mother and Tonya became regular attenders. Once the baby was born (a girl) and a regular routine established, Jason sought and received permission to attend membership classes. In the end he wasn't ready to join. Later I worked with Jason and Tonya during Sunday school hour on premarital counseling. Then everything changed when Jason was sent back to lock-up for violating several conditions of his work release.

I continued to visit Jason for an hour every other week. As his spiritual adviser I could have contact visits and sit in the same room with him. Tonya and baby Jordan could only visit via the phone behind the glass. I mostly listened and let Jason take the lead. Most days he was anxious to tell me about what was on his mind.

At our last visit he wanted my opinion on a recurring dream he had been having. I learned a lot about life in the violent pod—the hierarchy of power, racial and gang tensions, the boredom of prison life. A labor shortage caused a new regimen of lock-down time, which meant Jason spent half the day in his cell. I always prayed before I left, and each time I was confronted with the utter disparity of our lives.

What began as a journey of biblical "oughtness" and altruism matured into a journey toward holiness. I am under no illusion that our church or my involvement with Jason and

Arts in Prison photo—for illustration only

Tonya would guarantee a successful transition once Jason was released from prison.

I didn't know if Jason and Tonya would make it as a married couple, whether they would ever join our church or if Jason could stay out of prison. But I know that our love for them is genuine and that by helping them cope with the basics of life we discover a new avenue of service and spiritual growth.

I kept reminding myself and the congregation that we couldn't help every prisoner, but we could help Jason. We couldn't help every teenage welfare mother, but we could help Tonya and Jordan. It is precisely because their experience didn't fit the normal patterns of our daily lives that they stretched us to embrace the Christ we found there.

"For I was in prison and you visited me" (Matthew 25:36b). That is why rural churches need city churches, why people of privilege and power need regular contact with those without, why North American churches need contact with churches in the Two-Thirds World.

Prison visitation became a spiritual discipline for me when I began to realize that the one being rehabilitated was really me. So when I said, "I need to visit Jason this week," it meant I had an appointment with one of my spiritual advisers, who happened to live in the county prison.

Jim S. Amstutz is senior pastor of West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa. Jason was released on parole Sept. 12, 2000, after this article was written. He and Tonya are now married, have steady jobs and continue to relate to West Swamp. Their daughter Jordan, 3, enjoys attending preschool.

Prison visitation became a spiritual discipline for me when I began to realize that the one being rehabilitated was really me.

A big house for abandoned children

Spanish congregation sends workers to Benin

COTONOU, Benin—There was perfect silence except for the prayer of thanksgiving as 10 children with soap-shined faces bowed their heads. Set before each one in a blue plastic dish was a mound of thick corn porridge and dried fish in tomato sauce. A nutritious meal is not taken for granted by these children who have often gone to sleep with empty bellies.

They are among the 13 residents of Casa Grande, a home for abandoned children in Cotonou. It was started last August when Burgos Mennonite Church in Burgos, Spain, sent Paco and Annette Castillo, along with their infant son, Daniel, to Benin. The Castillos are working under the legal umbrella of Mennonite Board of Missions for two years until Casa Grande, Spanish for "big house," can obtain government authorization.

Becoming houseparents for forgotten children has been a call the Castillos have pursued for years. "After living in the hell of the drug world, I absorbed the love of God through the ministry of Christians," Paco says. "Having been pardoned, delivered and healed by God, I received a vivid summons to work among marginalized people."

His work has taken him to several African countries. Paco was attending an evangelistic service in Ivory Coast when he first met Annette in 1997. They met again in Burkina Faso, where they were both involved in mission work. After their marriage in 1999, they served in Equatorial Guinea before spending a year in Burgos preparing for their assignment in Benin.

Annette grew up in a Christian family in Ivory Coast. She longed to reach out to street kids, but neither her church nor her family had the financial means to help her begin such a ministry.

"I kept begging the Lord to allow me to gather abandoned children together in a center," Annette says. "I bless the Lord because now I'm able to do what I've yearned to do for a long time."

Those who have already found their way to Casa Grande range in age from 4-month-old Jean Léo to Gisèle, 22 years. Each child is "adopted" by a family or an individual member of Burgos. Each sponsor helps financially to provide for one child's food and be a link between the child and the congregation.

MBM photo by Bruce Yoder

Annette Castillo and 4-month-old Jean Léo, the youngest resident of Casa Grande, a home for abandoned children founded by Castillo and her husband in Cotonou, Benin

The congregation also sends short-term volunteers to Casa Grande and subsidizes the children's clothing, school fees and health care through fund raising and in collaboration with other churches in Spain.

Gisèle came to Casa Grande last fall looking for work and telling a gruesome story of sexual abuse and witch hunts. When she was young, her mother was chased from home by accusations that she was a witch. Though Gisèle's father had four other wives, none of them would care for the neglected little girl. When her father was thrown into prison, Gisèle essentially became an orphan. As she didn't fit into the village's norms, Gisèle was branded a witch, and she fled to Casa Grande.

Gisèle now gives much-needed help to the Castillos as she learns more about Jesus.

The Castillos believe they can double the number of children at Casa Grande before they will need to move from the present rented house to larger facilities. Their hope is that within two or three years, they will be able to build "una casa mas grande"—a much bigger house.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

New MCC worker takes it on the chin

The impending changes for Evelyn and Wallace Shellenberger are as plain as the whiskers on Wallace's face.

"I've never grown a beard in my life," he says.

But he did so to fit the customs of Iran, where the Shellenbergers, from Paoli, Ind., will be moving this month to start a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment this month. Wallace will study religion at the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute in Qom, and Evelyn hopes to volunteer for a social service agency.

The assignment is part of an exchange program to help Christians in the West better understand Islamic cultures and perspectives and for Iranians to understand Western Christianity. MCC has brought Iranian students to study at the Toronto School of Theology.—*MCC News Service*

Globalization helps rich, hurts poor

Seminar focuses on international economic trends

WASHINGTON—The increasing flow of goods and people across national borders—a trend called economic globalization—could have ideal results, says economics professor Karen Klassen Harder: People would connect, racial divisions would blur, the natural resources of each nation would be utilized and distributed evenly to the world's population and the market would be open to anyone.

But it is not happening. For example, in Mexico, small farmers are also struggling because they can no longer compete with foreign imports as a result of the North American Free Tree Agreement. "Globalization primarily protects the interests of international companies and developed nations," says Harder, who teaches at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.

She was one of the speakers at "Economic Globalization: For Richer, For Poorer?", the focus of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. Washington Office's annual Spring Seminar April 1-3. Seventy-five participants explored the effects of globalization on immigration, women, people of color in the United States, employees in transnational corporations, communities in the global South, workers' rights, unions and the role faith should play in resolving the injustices of globalization.

Harder suggested that Christians advocate for stricter human rights policies for world markets; study how to balance a locally based, sustainable community with the assets of a global church; advocate for those harmed by the global economy; and realize that the system is to blame, though individuals make up the system.

Seminar participants challenged the idea that globalization is inevitable, and most speakers agreed that current economic globalization has been created through policy decisions. Globalization can be altered, they said, through changing public policy, educating consumers and boycotting the products and companies where human rights are violated. For example, a successful consumer protest of Starbucks in response to poor working conditions on coffee farms led the popular coffee retailer to implement its first-ever corporate code of conduct for agricultural workers.

In group discussion, participants noted that an important piece of the globalization picture was missing: The people most negatively affected were not present. Participants also agreed that people negatively affected by globalization should not only be a part of discussions, but also be leading them on the impact of globalization. Washington Office staff members noted that they rely on MCC partners in the global South as they formulate advocacy positions.

The seminar also featured an advocacy trip to Capitol Hill to meet with congressional aides about globalization issues.—*Tina Hartman for MCC News Service*

Simply observing another culture isn't enough – Goshen College students dive in.

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New CEE curriculum wants to span chasm between Chinese and North Americans

NEWTON, Kan.—Recent international events make it clear that China and the United States, two of the most powerful nations in the world, have a long way to go in understanding each other.

Now, a new curriculum written especially for use by teachers in China Educational Exchange (CEE), an inter-Mennonite program that supplies English teachers for colleges, universities and technical schools in China, is bridging that gap in its own modest way.

The three-book curriculum series is titled "Students and Teachers Learn Together," a phrase taken from a Chinese saying. The series was written by Dennette Alwine of Lombard, Ill. She and her husband, Todd Friesen, spent seven years in China with CEE as English teachers and as CEE's China-based program co-coordinators.

Alwine says she would have liked to have worked on the curriculum while she was still in China, but realistically there was not time. So when she and Friesen returned to the United States in 1998, she began work on the project. She completed the first book, *Finding Our Commonalities,* which is geared to first- and second-year university students, in January 2000 and sent it to some CEE teachers for testing. The book was finished by that fall.

By January 2001, Alwine had completed *Appreciating Our Differences*, for second- and third-year university students, and *Exploring Life Values,* for third- and fourth-year students. In late January she traveled to Hong Kong to introduce the series to CEE teachers at their annual Professional Improvement Conference.

One objective of the curriculum is to provide an "idiot's guide to teaching," says Kathi Suderman, who with her husband, Rod, lives in Beijing and serves as CEE program co-coordinator. CEE teachers often have little or no teaching experience, much less experience with teaching English as a second language.

But Suderman adds, "The curriculum is, of course, much more than that. Lesson plans are lesson plans, but material that assists us in discussing meaningful issues with our students is a bonus."

Therein lies a second, deeper, objective. In the introduction, Alwine writes, "In spite of the opening of relations between China and the West, a great chasm still exists in our ability to understand each other."

A favorite story she tells is the aftermath of the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in May 1999. A former Chinese colleague wrote: "When the embassy accident happened, I was greatly shocked. … At that moment, nearly all Chinese people, students and children began to hate America and Americans. But I became so mixed. I really felt complicated in my mind. On the one hand, I know you. I know many CEE teachers. You are so kind, how can I hate you?"

Alwine says: "What struck me most about my friend's message was this: that because we know each other, we cannot hate each other. … In my mind, knowing each other is what creates the hope that such conflict need not always exist.

"I hope the teachers can see themselves as being on a journey with the students that leads to transformation for both."

CEE member organizations are the Commission on Overseas Mission, Eastern Mennoite Missions, Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services International and Mennonite Central Committee. CEE sends English teachers to work in Chinese institutions of higher education and also helps sponsor Chinese scholars to come to Canada and the United States to teach and study.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

> I hope the teachers can see themselves as being on a journey with the students that leads to transformation for both.
>
> —*Dennette Alwine*

Sign of the times

Eric Good Kauffman, art teacher at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind., and student Myriah Gasa work on display of the logo for this summer's churchwide convention in Nashville, Tenn. The plexiglass sign will hang over the podium and stage area of the hall to be used for delegate and adult worship sessions. About 15 Bethany students are working on the project, which Kauffman estimates will take 40 hours to complete.

GCMC photo by Kevin Miller

10 years of Iraqi sanctions topic of forum

ELKHART, Ind.—Ten years after the Gulf War that forced Iraqi troops from the oil fields of Kuwait, Iraqi casualties continue to mount. The victims are no longer soldiers but most often children and the elderly. The weapons are no longer tanks and smart bombs, but international trade sanctions that cripple the ability of Iraqis to feed their children and care for the ill.

Those were the sentiments expressed April 10 at a forum on the Iraqi sanctions hosted by Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart.

"I'm not optimistic that the sanctions will be lifted," said David Cortright, president of the Fourth Freedom Forum and an adjunct professor at Goshen (Ind.) College. "But it is more possible now than in the last several years."

He noted the deterioration of the sanctions and political pressure from other nations as two factors that could lead to the end of the sanctions. Nations such as France, Russia and the Arab states oppose the measures, while the United States and England are the strongest supporters of sanctions.

Instead of civilian trade sanctions against the people of Iraq, Cortright advocated "smart sanctions." Under his plan, import and export restrictions would be lifted; arms would be embargoed; oil exports would still be funneled through a United Nations account; and imports would be monitored for potential use as weapons of mass destruction.

Laurel Severns of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), who recently returned from a trip to the region, put a human face on the consequences of a decade of sanctions. The infrastructure of Iraq was heavily damaged by bombings, giving average Iraqis limited access to electricity, clean water, and sewage and waste disposal. Most hospitals have no medicine, and schools often have inadequate textbooks and supplies. Malnutrition poses a pervasive health risk for the children of Iraq, and the infant mortality rate had doubled after only four years of sanctions.

If the sanctions are not lifted, Severns warned, an entire generation of Iraqis could grow up malnourished, poorly educated, dependent on others and acclimated to war.

The forum was sponsored by the Indiana Peace Action Network, AMBS, Fourth Freedom Forum and AFSC. AMBS professor Ted Koontz, who visited Iraq last year, moderated the discussion.—*John David E. Thacker*

Goshen College appoints new academic dean

GOSHEN, Ind.—Anita K. Stalter, Goshen College professor of education and chair of the teacher education program, has been named the school's vice president of academic affairs and academic dean, effective July 1.

Stalter, a member of the Goshen faculty since 1987, succeeds Paul Keim, who will return to the classroom as a professor in Bible, religion and philosophy. Stalter holds degrees from Eastern Mennonite University and James Madison University, both in Harrisonburg, Va., and Michigan State University, Lansing.

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this date in Mennonite history

May 8, 1742—Leaders of Skippack (Pa.) Mennonite Church write Dutch Mennonites, asking them to petition British authorities on their behalf for exemptions from military service.

Changes in Italy lead to new VMBM outreach

BARI, Italy—In Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions' newest outreach in Italy, a VMBM worker has started teaching English in Bari and hopes it can lead to opportunities to present the good news.

"One of my students had to leave the course early to take a job in Rome," says teacher Chrissie Oppedisano. "Unexpectedly God opened the door for me to share Jesus with him. Hopefully a seed has been planted and someone else will come along and water it."

The course grew out of Europe's changing economic and political landscape. "Since [Italy] joined the European Community, they realized that they lagged way behind northern Europe in their English training," says Willard Eberly, VMBM's Mediterranean regional director. "Aside from what they requested, language classes give our mission personnel an entree into a different level of Italian society."—*Connections*

Canadian college board wants one president

WINNIPEG—It happened sooner than expected, but two years after three Mennonite colleges in Winnipeg came together to form a new school, its board of directors is recommending a single presidency.

Canadian Mennonite University was created from a partnership of Mennonite Church Canada's Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Mennonite Brethren's Concord College and Menno Simons College, affiliated with the University of Winnipeg. The three colleges have each kept their presidents, although CMU is governed by one board.

A single presidency was expected sometime in the future, just not this soon, says CMU board chair Bruce Baergen. But he says the merger process has gone so smoothly that the board thinks it is time to proceed further. The board's recommendation says nothing about budget or process for selecting a new president.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Students reach national forensics tournament

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Three students at Bethel College, North Newton, competed at the American Forensics Association National Individual Events Tournament April 6-7 at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., but did not advance beyond the preliminary rounds.

Katie Best, a freshman from Buhler, Kan., competed in extemporaneous speaking. Ryan Christopher Graber, a sophomore from Newton, Kan., and Aziza Hasan, a sophomore from Halstead, Kan., presented duo acting. Hasan also competed in communications analysis.

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Births

Amstutz, Anna Katarina, April 4, to Heidi (Boschmann) and Lon Amstutz, Indianapolis.

Diener, Félix Daniel Pérez, Feb. 20, to Denise and Gilberto Diener, Aibonito, P.R.

Epp, Brooklyn Taylor, April 9, to Matthew and Renae (Goertzen) Epp, Henderson, Neb.

Fetter, Tyson Charles, March 25, to Jamie and Stephanie (Nafziger) Fetter, Tiffin, Ohio.

Froese, Caleb Lynn, March 1, to Dale and Dawn (Meyer) Froese, Inman, Kan.

Heddin, Hunter Allen, March 29, to Frances and Jonathan Heddin, Hesston, Kan.

Klassen, Haley Tayla, April 4, to Susy (Giesbrecht) and Walter Klassen, Yorktown, Va.

Morano, Emma Lee Claire, April 7, to Kathryn (Siftar) and Leo Morano III, Harleysville, Pa.

Marriages

Maust/Shelley: Weldon Maust, Harrisonburg, Va., and Rebecca Shelley, Harrisonburg, March 24 at Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Schmidgall/Weaver: Verena Schmidgall, Hopedale, Ill., and Troy Weaver, Hopedale, April 14 at Minier (Ill.) Assembly of God Church.

Deaths

Bianchi, Pearl Carter, 72, Orrville, Ohio, died March 5. Spouse: Armando Bianchi (deceased). Parents: William and Marie Carter (deceased). Survivors: children Angela Ratcliff, Toni Norris, Betty Smizer, Stephen Carter; 13 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 11 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville.

Bontrager, Sarah Roth, 90, Scottdale, Pa., died April 1 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Eli Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Nickalous and Mary Wagler Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Lucille Yoder, June Schrock, Joyce Millslagle, Charlotte Bontrager, Candace Frey, Bonnie Norris; 17 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 6 at Alden (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Jones, Sheryl Dirks, 44, Wichita, Kan., died March 26. Spouse: Dean Jones. Parents: Ernest and Betty Dirks. Other survivors: children Kyle, Morgan, Sara, Teddy. Memorial service: March 28 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita.

Kaufman, Ethel Horrisberger, 92, Millersburg, Ohio, died April 3. Spouse: Moses Kaufman Jr. (deceased). Parents: John and Tilla Jaberg Horrisberger (deceased). Survivors: children Shelba Swartzendruber, Harold, Stanley; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Nickel, Rudolf, 96, Hesston, Kan., died April 5. Spouse: Lillian Janke Nickel (deceased). Parents: Heinrich and Sara Penner Nickel (deceased). Survivors: children Henry, Mary Goosen, Betty Andres, Elsie Macklin, Sharon Franzen; 16 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Memorial service: April 9 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Nightengale, Amelia Penner, 92, Newton, Kan., died March 30. Spouse: (1st) Menno Penner (deceased); (2nd) Henry Nightengale (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Eva Boese Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Virgil; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 2 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.

Pankratz, Ardith Schmidt, 62, Hillsboro, Kan., died April 2. Spouse: Eldon Pankratz. Parents: Harlow and Theresa Schmidt (deceased). Other survivors: children Kevin, Terry, Cindy Jantzen, Kristi Diller; eight grandchildren. Funeral: April 5 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Peachey, Leonard, 84, Belleville, Pa., died April 6. Spouse: Mollie Hartzler Peachey. Parents: Ezra and Ella Mae Stoltzfus Peachey (deceased). Other survivors: children Alta Auker, Lee Ann Peachey Peachey, Sara, Dianne Saner, Gladys Turnbull; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Weirich, Susie Chupp Hershberger, 94, Middlebury, Ind., died March 22. Spouse: (1st) Daniel Hershberger (deceased); (2nd) Samuel Weirich (deceased). Parents: Moses and Susanna Hochstetler Chupp (deceased). Survivors: children Fannie Mabie, Dorothy Hooley, Barbara Crossgrove, Betty Crowley, Alvin Hershberger, Daniel Hershberger, Floyd Hershberger, Dale Hershberger, Lee Hershberger; stepchildren: Mary Weaver, Elizabeth Miller, Lydia Mae Ganger, Enos Weirich, Levi Weirich, Eli Weirich, Manass Weirich, Joas Weirich, Samuel Weirich Jr.; 22 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: March 26 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Yoder, Curtis, 80, Hesston, Kan., died March 24. Spouse: Hazel Beck Yoder (deceased). Parents: Christian Jr. and Mary Miller Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Deanna Yutzy, Melinda Baedke; six grandchildren. Memorial service: March 28 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship.

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- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible.
  For further information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; email <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director***, with some worship planning responsibilities.
  Send resume by June 15 to Senior Pastor, Maplewood Mennonite Church, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School**, near Lancaster, Pa., is accepting applications for some ***elementary teaching openings***.
  Contact Dave Helmus, Principal, 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike, Smoketown, PA 17576; 717-394-7107; email <daveh@lgms.pvt.k12.pa.us7>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in the ***resource room, 1st grade*** and an anticipated opening in ***middle school history/computer***.
  Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for ***singles*** beginning Sept. 1 and Dec. 1 for one-year voluntary service assignments.
  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Mennonite Voluntary Service** needs ***associate director/unit administrator***. Full-time position beginning August 2001. Experience and commitment to following Jesus in a life of service. Strong communication skills. Openness and interest in traveling. Location of office negotiable.
  Contact MVS office at 316-283-5100 or <mvs@gcmc.org>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.
  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.
  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Ephrata Mennonite School** has openings for the following teaching positions: ***music teacher, jr. high language arts teacher and possible elementary openings***. Ephrata Mennonite School has 206 students in grades K-9. The school is accredited by the Middle States Association and is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Council.
  Qualified people should contact David L. Sauder, Principal, 598 Stevens Road, Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-738-4266; email <dsauder@ephms.com>.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology; Bible/environmental science***.
  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.
  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions**, Salunga, Pa., seeks ***events coordinator*** to plan and coordinate public events and to assist with constituent relations activities. Exceptional communication, relational and organizational abilities required, as well as strong skill bases in multitasking and word processing. Occasional weekend/evening work required. Position begins July 2, 2001.
  Contact Sherill at 717-898-2251 or <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Plains Mennonite Church** seeks ***director of Christian education***: approximately 10-16 hours per week paid position beginning Sept. 1, 2001. Responsibilities include coordination of Sunday school program, teachers and resources. Qualifications include membership in a Mennonite congregation and commitment to Christ and the church as understood and expressed in the Anabaptist-Mennonite theological tradition.
  Direct inquiries to Plains Mennonite Church, 50 W. Orvilla Road, Hatfield, PA 19440; 215-362-7640.

- **Ready for new opportunities** to serve others? This summer, Mennonite Central Committee needs a service program coordinator to serve in ***Florida***. MCC also needs country representatives to serve for a year, preferably longer, in ***Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania*** and ***Zambia***. Country representatives need to have worked and lived in a culture other than their own for at least a year.
  Please contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>, or the MCC office nearest you to apply for any of these five leadership positions open this summer.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted camp ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church, seeks ministry-minded person to serve as ***maintenance technician*** on buildings & grounds team, responsible for upkeep and development of Spruce Lake's property, plant and equipment. Applicant should have experience/training in building- and/or grounds keeping-related tasks. Salary and liberal benefits package. Optional on-campus housing. Open immediately.
  Send resume to Executive Director, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.
  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.
  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English; interest in directing musical/drama also desired. One year, full-time.
  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.
  Other positions available: ***keyboarding and intro computer instructor, assistant boys' resident director, head tutor, kitchen assistant, coaches*** (head girls' soccer, head girls' basketball, JV boys' soccer).
  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Sunday/Monday Woman: Engaging Faith in Life (AugsburgFortress, $24.95/year) is a Christian magazine, now in its second year of publication. Its goal is to provide "substance and nurture to women seeking to discover and live a deeper faith and spirituality." To subscribe call 888-336-4757.

Mark by Timothy J. Geddert (Herald Press, 2001, $24.99) is the latest volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series. Geddert views Mark as a profound theologian and accomplished writer, not a mere compiler of traditions.

Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov—Orthodox Theology in a New Key by Paul Valliere (Eerdmans, 2001, $42) is the first detailed English introduction to the Russian school of Christian thought. Valliere explores the creative ideas of the Russian school, such as the humanity of God, kenotic Christology, sophiology, panhumanity, free theocracy, church-and-world dogmatics and prophetic ecumenism.

Hidden Springs of Hope: Finding God in the Desert of Suffering by Mary Walsh (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $9.95) presents a collection of inspirational stories about real people who have blossomed in the desert. She also provides a reflection and spiritual practice.

The Steward Living in Covenant: A New Perspective on Old Testament Stories by Ronald E. Vallet (Eerdmans, 2001, $20) explores Old Testament stories from Creation to Isaiah and links the life of the steward to the theme of covenant. The book includes two choral readings and three dramas by dramatist Wanda Vassallo designed to enliven worship and educational programs.

The Joy of Generosity by Robert Heerspink, Mary Westmaas, Susan Weaver Van Lopik, Jennifer Holberg and Faith Ebbers DeYoung (Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2001, $34.95) helps congregations see that stewardship means taking care of God's world and using our time, talents and treasures carefully.

Shaken Faith: Hanging in There When God Seems Far Away by Antoinette Bosco (Twenty-Third Publications, 2001, $9.95) shares the ups and downs of Bosco's faith journey and what she has learned. She shows that God is not a "deadbeat dad" but a passionate lover.

Walking With a Hurting World (Mennonite Central Committee, 2001, free loan) is a 13-minute video that intersperses the Lord's Prayer with scenes of MCC's work around the world, showing the faith and aspirations that guide that work. Order from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

Four-Dimensional Jesus by John Timmer (Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2001, $9.95) explores the differences in how the four Gospels present Jesus. Timmer writes, "The reality of the crucified and risen Jesus is more profound and complex than the portrait of Jesus in any single Gospel—or … than the portraits of all four Gospels together."

Powers, Weakness and the Tabernacling of God by Marva J. Dawn (Eerdmans, 2001, $14) offers groundbreaking scholarship and challenges readers to rethink the goals and mission of the congregation, to develop practices that follow God's "hidden" way to weakness and to expand their sense of what it means to be a faithful church.

What Mennonites Are Thinking, 2000, edited by Merle Good and Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 2001, $11.95), includes essays, fiction, poetry, film capsules and book reviews by Mennonite writers.

Recommended reading

Hope Against Darkness: The Transforming Vision of Saint Francis in an Age of Anxiety by Richard Rohr (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2001, $16.95) models St. Francis' wisdom, courage, patience. Rohr, a Franciscan priest and retreat speaker, calls Christians to transformative traditionalism." He points to Francis' example: "The best criticism of the bad is the practice of the better." Rohr is eminently quotable. For example: "Junk religion is usually characterized by fear of the present and fear of the future (which is really fear of God)." "People say they do not want to give way on important moral issues, but far too often they don't want to give way on the ego's need to be right, superior and in control." "If you see God clearly, you will behave in a good and human way."*—gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

When bad things happen to bad people

By most standards, Timothy McVeigh is a bad person. On May 16, he will be put to death by lethal injection. McVeigh will go to his death with no apparent remorse for killing 168 people and injuring 500 others in the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Those murdered included children, whose deaths McVeigh described recently as "collateral damage" in his war against the U.S. government.

Bad people like McVeigh have terrible things happen to them. But bad people also deserve to have good things happen to them. In spite of their choices, we are called to do what we can to bring goodness into their lives. Two articles in this issue describe such goodness: Elvera Voth (page 4) leads a men's choir in a federal penitentiary. Jim Amstutz (page 6) befriends a young assailant.

Even the most despised criminal can have hope in his heart rather than hatred in his eyes.

It is a challenge to be compassionate to people who are guilty of criminal behavior and difficult to care when ugly things happen to them. It is a natural instinct to feel they deserve what they get. However, such a reaction is not loving our neighbors. I learned this lesson on the way to work one day while riding the bus from my home in Goshen, Ind., to Elkhart.

The 12-mile route took us past the county jail. I was the only passenger on the bus when a young woman, self-conscious in her prison jumpsuit, climbed aboard and sat several rows behind me. For the first 10 minutes I ignored her, not wanting to get involved in whatever unsavory life she led. Finally, I turned and began a conversation. She quickly told me her story.

After being arrested for public intoxication, she decided to ignore the summons to a court hearing. Consequently, the court issued a warrant for her arrest; she ended up serving a month for contempt of court. Now she was glad to be out but had troubles. Somehow, the jailers lost her clothes and personal belongings. While she was serving her time, her roommate sold her possessions to pay for the rent and then changed the locks on the door. She had $4 to her name and was mostly looking forward to a salad bar after weeks of prison food. Before getting off the bus, I offered her $20 and my business card so she could contact me if she needed help. She gratefully accepted. I never saw her again.

She may have committed crimes more serious than skipping a court date. Her entire story may have been fabricated. By giving her money, I may have simply rewarded her as a manipulator. On the other hand, it sounded as if some bad things were happening to her. So I risked being exploited.

However, a $20 risk is insignificant compared with the ones taken by Voth and others who participate in a spiritual discipline of prison visitation. Their investments of time, energy and personal relationships are born of compassion. This compassion is driven by the extraordinary assumption that even the most despised criminal can, as Voth says, have hope in his heart rather than hatred in his eyes.

But what about people who have done the most ghastly and frightening things? Why should we take risks with those who have no remorse for horrific crimes?

Because ours is a faith that believes it is never too late. God's power to transform the human heart is greater than any hardened spirit. It is greater than Timothy McVeigh's bone-chilling beliefs. Prophetic voices such as Voth's call us to offer goodness to even the worst people in this world. In the next days, we can offer Timothy McVeigh our prayers. We can pray for him to confess his crimes and that God will save his soul. May one good thing happen to this bad person.—*ejt*

The Mennonite receives four contest awards

For the second year in a row, *The Mennonite* took home first place for the best theological reflection article from Associated Church Press (ACP). "Parables of the Kingdom and Other Faiths" by Alain Epp Weaver (April 25, 2000) was judged the best of 19 entries in the category of theological reflection, 1,500 words or fewer.

***The Mennonite* received second place awards for Bible study series with its "Difficult Texts of the Bible" series and for poetry with "Bedside" by John Grey (Feb. 15, 2000).**

The magazine was also given the Blooper of the Year Award for a photo of Civilian Public Service smokejumpers in the Feb. 22, 2000, issue. Editors did not notice that the photo included one worker who was, as the judges noted, "giving—to put it politely—a hand signal that is universally recognized."

The awards were presented April 24 during ACP's annual convention in Minneapolis.

the Mennonite

May 15, 2001

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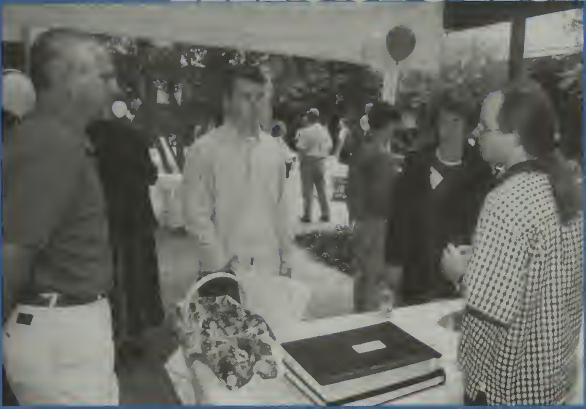
Pasadena Mennonite: being missional



Above from left: Pasadena Mennonite Church pastor Jim Brenneman and PMC members Bert Newton and Beth Jones talk with a new student about the congregation at a Fuller Theological Seminary open house . Above right: Nancy MacMillan (left) talks with Aria Griffin. Right: Laura Simmons, a Pasadena Mennonite Church member, sings a hymn.

7 Profile of new mission agency
8 On the other side of paradise
10 Mission leaders call for urban emphasis
16 Preach what we practice

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Prosperity gap

The editorial on Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) ("Managing Our Assets," May 1) serves to highlight further the economic disparity between us and most of our sister Anabaptist churches around the world.

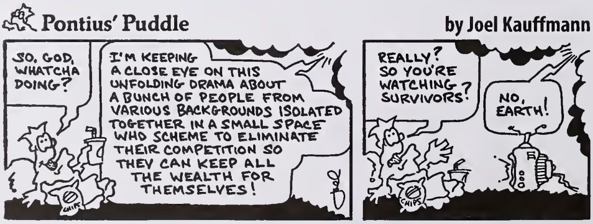
For example, MMA last year disbursed $2.4 million through its Sharing Fund (for use by U.S. congregations for local needs). I strongly support this program, but that alone represents more than three times last year's budget for the entire Meserete Kristos Church of Ethiopia ($740,273). The MKC, an active member of Mennonite World Conference, has 248 congregations, an additional 604 church-planting centers and one small Bible college to serve a baptized membership of 79,940. The church continues to grow rapidly, with some 167,000 worshipers in their services on a given Sunday morning (possibly exceeding the number now attending the two newly merging Mennonite churches in the United States). MKC members are faithful tithers, in spite of a national per capita income of only $10 a month.

In light of this embarrassing prosperity gap (ours largely spiritual and theirs material?), how can we manage to thread our increasingly bloated camel through the narrow eye of Jesus' needle?—*Harvey Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Education spending

The story about Christian Peacemaker Teams' poll in Lancaster, Pa., is interesting ("Poll Shows Contrast with Federal Budget," May 1), but the comments about education spending need some clarification. It is true that the federal government spends only a small percentage of its budget on education. However, most of public education spending in the United States comes from state and local governments (which creates some inequalities, but that is not my main point). For example, my school district, Valparaiso (Ind.) Community Schools, received about $750,000 in grants from the federal government and about $32 million from state and local governments. Also, many people send their children to private schools, thus supporting both public education (through taxes) and private education (through tuition). It seems likely that the total amount of money we pay for education is much more than the entire federal budget. I do think military spending is very high, but the story could leave the impression that education spending in our country is much lower than it actually is.—*Jay Guengerich, Valparaiso, Ind.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


SO, GOD, WHATCHA DOING?
I'M KEEPING A CLOSE EYE ON THIS UNFOLDING DRAMA ABOUT A BUNCH OF PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS BACKGROUNDS ISOLATED TOGETHER IN A SMALL SPACE WHO SCHEME TO ELIMINATE THEIR COMPETITION SO THEY CAN KEEP ALL THE WEALTH FOR THEMSELVES!
CHIPS
REALLY? SO YOU'RE WATCHING SURVIVORS?
NO, EARTH!
CHIPS

Inevitable revolution

I would like to thank David Ortman for the much-needed statement on Mennonite social irresponsibility (Readers Say, May 1). The need for social action on a national and global level is more crucial than ever to the survival of everything that is good and decent and just. I pray that the Mennonite church is not becoming another story of religious negligence and tragedy (like the church during the Jewish Holocaust) as corporate capitalism—a religion as much as an economic system—expands its dictatorship to unprecedented global degrees.

The global justice movement, shown most vividly in the United States by the recent protests of corporate trade agreements, is a revolution that is inevitable. It is inevitable because the world is literally coming under the totalitarian rule of the CEOs of the world's largest corporations. That is neither speculation nor paranoia; that is fact for those who care to investigate. Meanwhile, the oppressed peoples of the world and those with moral substance are not going to simply stand by and let it all happen. The people of color in the global South (Third World) and Westerners with a conscience have been working together for a few years to create solidarity networks and nonviolent means for countering the version of globalization initiated by the world's richest men—for their benefit only.

This is a reminder of grand, historical proportions to religious people (Mennonites included) to get their act together. Call me a heathen and revoke my Mennonite membership, but don't throw Bible verses at me and tell me we need to argue for another century about women in leadership and homosexuality. —*Dan Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan.*

Accepting the call

In all the recent discussion about women in ministry, I have yet to hear any comments about God's call. I am a pastor because God

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Vol. 4, No. 19, May 15, 2001

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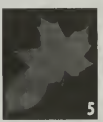
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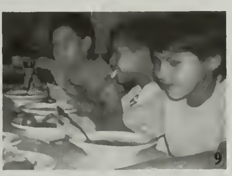
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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

pursued me relentlessly for most of my 46 years until I finally stopped running, turned around and accepted my calling to be a pastor. Nor was my discernment something I did alone; besides hearing many challenges and affirmations from dozens of fellow church members and various pastors, I also spent 12 years with a spiritual director who patiently watched, listened and led me through a process whose outcome was unmistakable.

It is not true that women become pastors because we crave power. There are enough hassles in this vocation, especially for women, that very few people would choose to do this for a lark. A (male) pastor friend of mine put it this way, "People should become pastors only if there's nothing else they can do." He was not talking about lack of skills but about the fact that when one is called to the ministry, nothing else will do. Beyond all the theologizing for and against, I am a pastor because to not be a pastor was to violate God's will for my life.

When conferences refuse to ordain women, they sin against faithful women, the church and the Holy Spirit. If I had to deny my calling, I would also have to deny the presence of Christ in my life as I walked the road to get here, as well as the Word spoken through other people. I know some would disagree, already considering me an unbeliever because I am a woman pastor. My response is sadness that the Holy Spirit is being shackled by their refusal to allow God to be who God will be and to call whomever God will call.—*Lynne C. Martin, Arnaud, Man.*

Parable praise

Thank you for Ryan Ahlgrim's "Limericks of Jesus." What a creative and contemporary way to work at the core meaning of each parable. —*Lois and Ernie Hess, Lancaster, Pa.*

Cover photo by Tom Price, MBM News Service

Taking the gospel across the street in Southern California

Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church demonstrates 'missional church' traits.

by Tom Price

MBM photo by Tom Price

The Mennonite emphasis on justice and peace and its biblical evangelical sensibility are an attractive combination for people.

—Jim Brenneman, pastor of Pasadena Mennonite Church

While doing graduate work in earthquake seismology at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Joel Klompien-Wedberg had dismissed Christians because of a reputation for being "scornful of science."

But this geophysicist, whose parents did not attend church and described themselves as atheists, began attending a "Religion and Science Salon" led by Pasadena Mennonite Church's pastor, Jim Brenneman, and another member of the congregation, who is a neurosurgeon at nearby Cal Tech. They started the gathering to break down stereotypes that often exist between the scientific and Christian communities. As Joel built relationships with others in the congregation, he eventually chose to attend PMC.

"The more I knew about Pasadena Mennonite Church's vision of Jesus, the more I knew I wanted to follow Jesus and learn about him, too," he says. "There was respect at PMC, not disdain, for other religions. And there was an inclusive atmosphere that made me feel welcome as I explored the possibilities ... to be a Christian. ... Since then, I have become increasingly Christian all the time."

The day he was baptized at Pasadena Mennonite Church was "a real moving morning," according to Jim.

In Southern California, where church attendance figures are the lowest in the nation, PMC uses unconventional and creative means to engage its community with the gospel. Members lead discussion groups on religion and film, protest injustice and witness to their faith through chalk art and street dramas, and create Christmas worship pageants, which attract people for their artistic sensibilities and leave them hungering for something more. Jim calls this "tailor-made mission."

"For me, mission is proclaiming the lordship of Jesus Christ or helping people do that in their own setting with their own gifts as opposed to giving the mission a standardized formula," says Jim, who accepted a call as pastor of the emerging congregation in 1987. With a two-year, $10,000 grant from Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), the congregation began during the Mennonite Church's Vision 95 focus on church planting.

Anabaptist vision: Yet PMC shunned the traditional approach. Rather than draw together Mennonites who had moved to Southern California to get away from their Mennonite backgrounds, the congregation sought people attracted to the Anabaptist vision of church. "The Mennonite church becomes an asset. When they are here and they discover what it means to be Mennonite, it's very compatible with their beliefs," Jim says. "The Mennonite emphasis on justice and peace and its biblical evangelical sensibility are an attractive combination for people."

Today, 85 percent of the congregation consists of new Mennonites.

"Many of us in our own churches were Anonymous Anabaptists," says Bert Newton, describing Christians in other denominations who have Anabaptist beliefs. "There are a lot of Anonymous Mennonites out there and some of us found our way to the Mennonite church."

As Mennonite Church USA leaders talk about the new denomination becoming a missional church, they are describing an epic shift in the church's conception of mission. Rather than anticipating that a mission agency do global mission on behalf of the congregations, the missional-church approach envisions a denomination in which "every congregation is fully engaged in mission from across the street to around the world," say leaders.

PMC has become a magnet for people concerned about the mission of the church. Many members have some form of international service experience. A third of the congregation have doctorates; most of the remaining have master's degrees. Despite being a highly educated congregation, however, PMC wants to engage its surrounding community with the gospel, says Jim.

"Pasadena Mennonite is a leadership-development engine," says Jeff Wright, executive director of the Center for Anabaptist Leadership and conference minister for Southern California, "a church that has churned out 50 leaders in mission, preaching and administration in the last 15 years." PMC provides most of the leaders for CAL's School for Urban Anabaptism and English-as-a-second-language programs. Jeff likes to tell Mennonite visitors from "back east" that "this is what the

Pasadena Mennonite Church members feed the homeless, operate victim-offender reconciliation programs, run alternative Christmas sales and join in making their congregation Los Angeles County's largest supporter of the CROP Walk for hunger relief.

Mennonite church of the future looks like."

"Mission is so much a part of the lives of people in this congregation," says Kristi Zabriskie, a seminary student who was raised in the Christian Reformed Church and recently became PMC's associate pastor. Kristi has been part of a small group called Mission Impossible. The group consists exclusively of people who feel called into long-term mission assignments. That experience is common. In 15 years, the congregation has sent 16 people into long-term mission, including MBM president Stanley W. Green, MBM's Mark and Mary Thiessen Nation in London, and Commission on Overseas Mission and MBM's Mike and Terry Sherill in Japan.

PMC becomes a way station for Christians from other church backgrounds. "This is a good congregation for the wounded and for the people who need healing, who understand that it often doesn't happen right away," says Nancy MacMillan, a member of the worship commission. Jim says, "The church has been a place for recovering Christian people who went through the educational system and lost their faith or for people who had a truncated faith [or for] people burned out working in mission."

Yet, given the congregation's history of mobility, only 20 percent of people who attend PMC will be there in 10 years. "They're going to go out with a different vision of the church," says Tyler Zabriskie, who was raised in the Episcopal Church. "It's a very powerful ministry. It's a ministry of reforming the daily vision of what the church can be. That's a very powerful vision. If I end up in the Episcopal Church, … it will be part of my vision of what the church can be."

continued on page 6

MBM photo by Tom Price

More than Rose Bowl Parades: Nancy MacMillan (left), a member of the congregation who has lived on Madison Street for 11 years, talks with Aria Griffin as part of Urban Village, a small group of mostly Pasadena Mennonite Church members who have formed an intentional community in one of Pasadena's poorest neighborhoods.

A slice of the soul

by Larsen Bowker

I grew up listening to my mother's
Evangelical thunder, her thick fingers
banging out chords of solid faith,
so the only classical music I heard

as a child was the "Clair de Lune" my
third-grade teacher played on a piano missing
most of the ivory keys around middle C, single
velvet notes holding, holding, holding
until the next note came, like red

orange leaves riding dark river currents
across water stingy prairies, floating past
slaughterhouse cattle, the cracked window
panes of sagging storefronts, and women

wearing scarves triangled over hair
gone gray too soon, each note rising so I could
feel the particulars of my transcendence.

Larsen Bowker lives in Blacksburg, Va.

Corel

continued from page 5

Living in community: Although small, averaging 120 at worship, in a borrowed facility, PMC can accommodate a variety of large visions. It's an acknowledgment that Pasadena is more than Rose Bowl Parades and well-to-do homes. In northwest Pasadena, as many as 40 percent of the children live in poverty, and 65 percent of the homes are renter-occupied. A Sunday school class discussion of these concerns did not simply end there. Several members began talking about living in community in northwest Pasadena and eventually started Urban Village, an intentional community that includes members from other congregations. Last year as many as 15 people were meeting there each week.

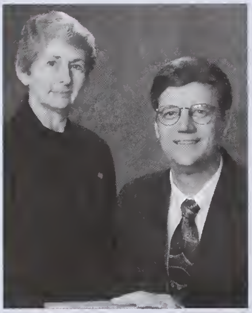
Urban Village members seek to share life, spiritual disciplines and service. Ten adults and two children moved into apartments or homes on one block of Madison Street in northwest Pasadena. They meet for prayer Tuesday mornings, for a common meal Thursday evenings and for worship, business and prayer on Sunday evenings.

"We're looking at issues that our neighborhood will care about—both global and local issues," says organizer Bert Newton, who has been ordained as a pastor for Urban Village.

Urban Village is but one congregational effort to minister to the poor and disenfranchised. PMC members feed the homeless, operate victim-offender reconciliation programs, run alternative Christmas sales and join in making their congregation Los Angeles County's largest supporter of the CROP Walk for hunger relief.

"Whatever service we are doing, we want to say we are doing it because of Jesus Christ, and to proclaim that as we do it," Jim says.

Tom Price works for Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Ind., and is a member of Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.



Courtesy photo

tM asks Mennonite Church USA leaders

In this monthly feature, moderator Lee Snyder and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman answer questions about the new denomination. Readers are welcome to submit questions to <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 1-800-790-2498.

Some members of our congregation do not want to join Mennonite Church USA, while others want to continue with MC USA. What can we do to avoid dividing our congregation? Is there some kind of dual membership available?

Up to this point, we have not worked at a way for members of the same congregation to have different membership status with Mennonite Church USA. Furthermore, the current membership guidelines assume that all the congregations in the same area conference will have the same membership status with the denomination. We have not proposed a dual membership status. In fact, Mennonite Church USA was conceived as a way to eliminate the need for dual membership for congregations who wished to affiliate fully with both the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Not everyone believes that the merger of General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church is God's will. As the ones moderating this discussion, how are you providing opportunity for the voices of dissent?

We have watched many people debate the relative merits of merger in conference gatherings, in the pages of church periodicals and in denominational meetings such as the Constituency Leaders Council. We have not sensed that anyone has deliberately silenced dissenters in those contexts.

We plan to provide an open forum for vigorous debate about the merger proposal at the delegate sessions in Nashville, Tenn. We hope to hear God, to hear each other and to make a wise decision. We expect to hear a full range of opinions expressed before we call for a vote. We doubt that everyone will agree that the delegate actions were completely consistent with God's will, but we hope that even the dissenters will feel they have been adequately heard in the discussion.

Third in a series

a profile
new mission agency

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Photo by Wayne Gehman/Mennonite Board of Missions

Gretchen Kingsley, a COM/MBM worker in Argentina, talks with a Toba child on a tribal reservation. Kingsley and her husband, Keith, are part of a multinational, interdenominational team that works with indigenous people in the Chaco region.

Mission

To lead, mobilize and resource the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in a broken world

Core values

- Engaging people and culture with the gospel
- Starting missional congregations
- Cultivating missional congregations
- Fostering a missional identity in the church

(core ministries approved by joint mission boards/commissions in March)

History

The new U.S. mission center (with another mission center in Canada) grows out of the union of the Commission on Home Ministries and Commission on Overseas Mission (General Conference Mennonite Church) and Mennonite Board of Missions (Mennonite Church). These organizations date their origins to 1861 (CHM), 1882 (MBM) and 1900 (COM).

Structure

The new mission agency will serve as the mission center for Mennonite Church USA with offices continuing in Elkhart, Ind., and Newton, Kan., and possibly at future denominational office sites. Conference-based mission agencies, such as Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions, will collaborate with the agency and have been invited to appoint representatives to its board of directors.

Executive officer

Stanley W. Green

Board members

The 15-member board includes seven nominees slated for affirmation by delegates at the Nashville assembly, six appointed by the Executive Board and a maximum of two appointed by EMM and VMBM. Appointed: Kenyetta Aduma,* Hampton, Va.; Herman Bontrager, Akron, Pa.; N. Leroy Kauffman, Clyde, N.C.; Steve Cheramie Risingsun,* Gretna, La.; Noel Santiago, Perkasie, Pa.; and Lee Schmucker,* Wichita, Kan. Slated for delegate affirmation: Tesfatsion Dalellew,* Lancaster, Pa.; Roma Eicher,* Albany, Ore.; Heidi Regier Kreider,* North Newton, Kan.; Chuwang Pam, Inglewood, Calif.; Alice Ruth Ramseyer,* Bluffton, Ohio; Tonya Ramer Wenger, Madison, Wis.; and Leonard Wiebe, North Newton, Kan. (* designates four-year term. All others are two-year terms.)

Financial information

Serving both Canada and the United States, current agencies had a combined budget of $10.422 million in 1999. (CHM: $965,000; COM: $2.316 million; MBM: $7.141 million). Total Canadian contributions ($1.39 million in 1999) represented 13 percent of binational budget.

Agency index:

(Numbers come from CHM, COM and MBM)

- Places of ministry: 58 countries, 37 U.S. states and five Canadian provinces
- Office staff: 86.7 full-time equivalency
- Percent of budget allocated overseas: 61 percent ($6.315 million)

On the other side of paradise, MCC volunteer pursues justice for Jamaica's mentally ill inmates

I felt like I was counseling them into being happy so they could die happily in prison.

—Roger Neill

KINGSTON, Jamaica—Ivan Barrows had been in prison since 1972, a long sentence just for breaking a window—and for being mentally ill.

On an exotic island where a thriving tourist industry exists alongside increasing human-rights concerns, Barrows' case reflects a criminal justice system in which mentally ill people are too often viewed as problems to be swept away or housed indefinitely in Jamaica's chaotic prisons.

"You drag mentally ill people out to a mud lake, they come back," says Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Roger Neill, referring to a 1999 incident in which 30 street people were abducted from Montego Bay in a municipal dump truck (see story below). "You put them in prison, and they stay forever."

A psychiatric social worker with 25 years experience, Neill is a member of a medical team that serves more than 4,000 inmates in several facilities. On March 28, he saw his work pay off as Barrows walked free after being illegally imprisoned for 29 years.

MCC country co-representative Ron Good accompanied Neill to the courtroom on the day of Barrows' release. The two MCC workers then drove him to a residential facility that agreed to care for the newly free man.

"Mr. Barrows was the embodiment of every cliché used to describe uncontainable joy: a child on Christmas morning, a kid in a candy store," Good says. "He was truly beside himself, and it was a sight to behold."

Neill's first MCC term was with the Committee for the Upliftment of the Mentally Ill, a Montego Bay group that provides rehabilitation and basic necessities for mentally ill clients. When he began his current assignment, he was horrified to find mentally ill inmates, the weakest in a system where only the strong survive, with no access to toothbrushes or soap, let alone rehabilitation. Neill tells of eight inmates in a cell for two, with no toilet, no bunks and half an inch of rainwater on the floor.

Neill

"The conditions are subhuman," says Clement Reid, a Jamaican correctional officer. "You see men being fed out of garbage bags."

Neill and his colleagues worked to introduce therapy and medication and hire more social workers. But their efforts could not change basic flaws in the criminal justice system. Neill found some inmates who, after being declared unfit to stand trial, had been held for years without further evaluation.

"I felt like I was counseling them into being happy so they could die happily in prison," he says.

Now barred from entering the prisons because he has publicly denounced abuses going on in them, Neill is trying to get the prisons to adopt guidelines for identifying and working with mentally ill inmates. He thinks as many as 450 such inmates may be illegally imprisoned in Jamaica's two largest prisons, and he plans to continue working for their release.

The issue has sparked interest from Jamaica's Human Rights Council, Good says, and the group plans to make wrongful incarceration their primary advocacy issue.

Neill escapes from his draining work by taking daily coffee breaks at Burger King. Despite the frustrations, he says he would not trade them for the calm life he once led in his native British Columbia.

"It's an honor to be doing this work," he says. "Praise the Lord."*—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

The sad saga of the 'Street People Scandal'

MONTEGO BAY, Jamaica—Roger Neill was the first Mennonite Central Committee worker to serve with Montego Bay's Committee for the Upliftment of the Mentally Ill. Today, two MCC volunteers work with CUMI: Kimberly Wiens and Sheila Morton.

Among their clients are victims of the July 1999 "Street People Scandal." Some 30 mentally ill homeless people were rounded up in downtown Montego Bay, some put in shackles and all taken in a municipal dump truck to a mud lake nearly 50 miles away. Morton and others spent days drawing media attention to the story and searching for missing clients. Some found their way back to Montego Bay, but not all.

An investigation recently pinned the blame for the incident on a midlevel police officer. The government has agreed to pay the victims the equivalent of $450 a month for life, but so far only one person has received money.*—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

Colleges and seminaries to confer degrees on 1,165 members of 21st century's first class

It started with one seminary commencement ceremony and will end with another nearly a month later. And when the pomp and circumstance is over, an estimated 1,165 students will have received degrees from the seven U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges and seminaries.

The first members of the first graduating class of the 21st century were from Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., which held its commencement ceremony April 28. Twenty students received diplomas. The commencement address was given by June Alliman Yoder, a professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind.

The next day Eastern Mennonite University, also in Harrisonburg, graduated a record 371 students. The school awarded bachelor's degrees to 321 students, while 50 received master's degrees in conflict transformation, counseling or education. Indonesian church leader Charles Christano, a former president of Mennonite World Conference, gave the commencement address.

Hesston (Kan.) College graduated 166 students on May 6, with Bible instructor Michele Hershberger giving the address.

Also on May 6, Bluffton (Ohio) College graduated 227 students, including eight with master's degrees in education.The commencement addres was given by Amy Gopp, a former assistant director of the college's Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center and former Mennonite Central Committee worker in Bosnia. She is now on the staff of the American University School of International Service in Washington.

During the weekend, Bluffton honored David Yost, class of 1983, with the Outstanding Alumni Award. A physician, he is director of the U.S. Public Health Service's Indian Health Service/White Mountain Apache Tribe Service Unit in Arizona. He is responsible for the clinical management and supervision of a $20 million public health program serving 15,000 Native Americans in eastern Arizona.

On May 20, about 105 students are expected to receive their diplomas from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. The commencement speaker will be college president Douglas Penner. Bethel's president since 1995, he will be leaving the post within the next year.

On that same day, Goshen (Ind.) College is planning to graduate 243 students, including the first four peace, justice and conflict studies majors. The commencement address will be given by international peacemaker John Paul Lederach, professor of sociology and conflict studies at Eastern Mennonite University.

AMBS will conclude the 2001 graduation season on May 25, when it confers degrees on 33 students. Patty Shelly, Bible and religion professor at Bethel College, will give the commencement address.

Three conferences add OK to merger

Eastern District Conference split from Franconia Conference in 1847. Now they want to be members of the same denomination.

With a near-unanimous vote on April 28, Franconia delegates approved becoming a charter member of Mennonite Church USA, while Eastern District delegates a week later took similiar action with a 65 percent straw vote.

Meanwhile, Rocky Mountain Conference delegates on May 5 unanimously voted to also become a charter member of the new denomination.

Should delegates at this summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn., approve the the creation of Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Church area conferences will need to take action whether to join the new denomination, while General Conference Mennonite Church members will automatically become members.

The three conferences join Gulf States, Ohio, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest and Central District in declaring their support for Mennonite Church USA.

MCC photo by Cam Kroeker

A place at the table

Children eat lunch at the Good Shepherd Shelter in Makeevka, Ukraine. The shelter was started in 1997 by local Christians to provide temporary shelter for abused and street children. This year, for the first time, the shelter is being supported by Mennonite Central Committee's Global Family program. In addition to the Ukraine, Global Family this year has expanded into four other countries: Burundi, Mexico, South Africa and Syria. The program helps thousands of students in 28 countries receive an education.

Mission leaders call for urban emphasis

We want church growth, but not at the expense of faith.

—Gracie Torres

MONTREAL—Where there are many people, there should be many Mennonites, says a group of people involved in urban ministry.

Twenty-four urban ministry directors, conference mission leaders and mission agency personnel met in Montreal April 20-21 to discuss the future of Mennonite ministry in urban areas. They drafted a proposal urging "current and emerging Mennonite mission agencies to adopt goals and policies that lead toward Mennonite congregational presence in urban areas which is proportionate to the size of the general population living in urban areas."

The proposal, sent to the denominational mission and Executive Board leaders, asks for "the same high priority and long-term commitment … that has characterized Mennonite mission work overseas for the last 100 years."

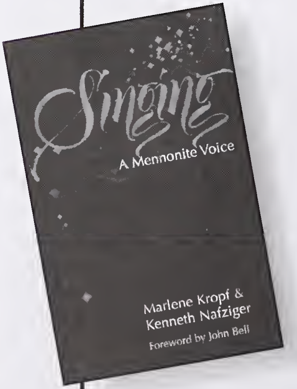
Said Marco Güete, urban ministry director for the Dallas-Fort Worth area: "Rural Mennonite congregations need to commission the younger generation to be bridge builders in the city. Young people are going to the city anyway, through curiosity and to look for jobs. Let the church orient them to the city."

"I'd go even further," said Brian Bauman, urban ministry director in California's Silicon Valley. "The urban congregation should call the rural youth to the city. Let the church get to them before Apple or Cisco get them."

Allan Howe, Chicago urban ministry director, highlighted the urban work being done by African-American, Ethiopian, Hispanic, Indonesian and other groups and the lessons they can teach the established, white Mennonite church. "The missional church vision will be costly," he said. "It's going to involve a lot of change."

But Gracie Torres, who ministers in Buffalo, N.Y., cautioned: "When we talk about Anglos needing to listen, that's right, but don't forget the strengths and distinctives of the Mennonite church. Yes, we want church growth, but not at the expense of faith."

The meeting was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions' Evangelism and Church Development department.*—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*



Singing: A Mennonite Voice

A collection of stories and reflections gathered from ordinary Mennonite worshipers throughout North America. The scores of interviews show again and again that singing is a Mennonite sacrament.

The ideas and questions that grew out of producing *Hymnal: A Worship Book* resulted in a two-year listening and research project in which **Marlene Kropf** and **Kenneth Nafziger** asked hundreds of people in the church, "What happens when you sing?" The answers to these questions, along with favorite hymns, are presented here in four sections: "The Sound and Sense of Mennonite Singing," "What Happens When We Sing," "Toward a Spirituality of Song," and "What the Song Is Becoming." There is also an epilogue, "What Have We Learned?"

Singing: Treasures from Mennonite Worship features the Eastern Mennonite University Chamber Singers conducted by Kenneth Nafziger. It is part of the Hymnal Masterworks series of recordings. (June 2001 release date.)
Cassette, $10.99; in Canada $16.29
CD, $15.99; in Canada $23.79

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Peace initiative holds first conference

DULUTH, Minn.—Every Church a Peace Church, a new ecumenical peace campaign initiated by New Call to Peacemaking, held its first conference April 27-28, drawing 110 people from 20 religious communities to Duluth.

Participants, including Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Mennonites, Quakers, Jews and more, explored the question, "What if every church lived and taught as Jesus lived and taught?" Organizers said they want to challenge churches to address the problem of violence by nurturing a global network of creative nonviolence.

"A peace church finds authoritative direction for life in the way Jesus dealt with women, with the poor and with enemies," said keynote speaker John K. Stoner, coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking.

Grants to help college attract people of color

GOSHEN, Ind.—With the help of more than $425,000 in grants, Goshen College wants to connect with urban African, Latin, Asian and Native American youth.

The grants will fund a new "Partners for Learning" program, which will broaden activities for inner-city African, Latin, Asian and Native American youth, such as campus visits and conferences. Other activities will include bringing faculty members from people of color groups to campus as scholars-in-residence, expand the college's peer tutoring program, increase visibility of the gospel choir and add materials to the multicultural education resource library.

Goshen received three-year grants of $256,454 from an anonymous donor corporation and $177,572 from the Ford Foundation.

MCC releases report of Africa study

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee's most extensive study of its Africa work praised MCC workers' willingness to live simply and develop relationships but recommended ways to build on those relationships.

Many of the study's 28 recommendations, released last month in a 115-page report, call for MCC to emphasize "capacity building," building on communities' own strengths, resources and skills rather than imposing an outside model of development. The report also urges MCC to strengthen accountability between African MCC workers and African churches.

A six-member MCC listening team last fall interviewed nearly 700 people in 10 African countries plus the United States and Canada. Among those interviewed were MCC workers, African community and church leaders and MCC constituents.—*MCC News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

May 15, 1673—King William III of Orange exempts the Mennonites in North Holland from military service.

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2001

- **Budapest, Vienna & Prague** (May 11-24 *with Joseph Miller, Julie Zimmerman and Henry Landes*)
- **Lands of the Bible *(Jordan, Israel-Palestine, Egypt)*** (May 20-June 5 *with Ed Bontrager*)
- **England, Scotland & Wales** (June 29-July 13 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*) **SOLD OUT!**
- **Alaska** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Service Tour to Israel *(Nazareth Village)*** (October 26-November 8 *with Dale and Laura Schumm*)

2002

- **Service Tour in Sunny Jamaica** (January 25-February 3 *with Dave Worth*)
- **Australia & New Zealand** (February 8-28 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **Hawaii** (February 14-24 *with Jane Landes and Carolyn Bontrager*)
- **Paraguay, Bolivia and Peru** (April 6-22 *with Edgar Stoesz and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Spectacular Scandinavia & its Fjords** (June 17-July 1 *with Wilmer and Janet Martin*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 12-29 *with John Ruth and Henry Landes*)
- **Swiss Glacier Express** (August 12-26 *with John Ruth and Glen Landes*)

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Events

Global Fair, "a crossroads of cultures," July 14, at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Schools, sponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions. For information, contact Sharon Nolt, 717-898-2251.

Workers

Boyer, H. Wesley, has concluded a pastorate at Media Mennonite Church, Oxford, Pa. He is now pastor of Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa.

Dintaman, Pamela R., was ordained April 22 as pastor at Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Hollinger-Janzen, Lynda, recently of Benin, West Africa, has begun as a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

Hoover, Pearl, was installed March 25 as pastor at Northern Virginia Mennonite Church, Fairfax, Va.

Marchand, James, was ordained March 25 as pastor at Lynside Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

Miller, Kent, Wakarusa, Ind., has begun as a personnel counselor for MBM.

Stoltzfus, Regina Shands, Cleveland, has begun as a staff consultant in MBM's Evangelism and Church Development (ECD) department.

Tyson, Becky, Elkhart, Ind., has begun as program assistant in MBM's ECD department.

Births

Allen, Christian Joseph, March 19, to Eric and Erin (Stutzman) Allen, Goshen, Ind.

Bergen, Jayden Leigh, April 24, to Gretchen (Boehr) and Keith Bergen, Winter Park, Colo.

Brubacher, Ashley Marie, April 9, to Cynthia (Hershberger) and Mark Brubacher, St. Jacobs, Ont.

Clemens, Peter Sims, April 11, to Jon Clemens and Kristin Sims, Leola, Pa.

Deck, Nolan Jacob, March 15, to Cindy and James Deck, East Petersburg, Pa.

Entz, Joseph Delmer, April 8, to Carol (Jantzi) and Mark Entz, New Hamburg, Ont.

Gerdon, Dawson Burke, April 18, to David and Kristi (Widrick) Gerdon, Croghan, N.Y.

Hirst, Mitchell Thomas, April 12, to Aaron and Amy (Beal) Hirst, Partridge, Kan.

Irmiter, Owen McKee, March 30, to Paul Irmiter and Catherine McKee, Minneapolis.

Keim, Seth Richard, April 18, to Greg and Jennifer (Halterman) Keim, Harrisonburg, Va.

Keller, Timothy Bryant, March 20, to Joe and Patti (Troyer) Keller, Middlebury, Ind.

Lowry, Shannon Conner, March 14, to Carol (Kiser) and Craig Lowry, Harrisonburg, Va.

Martin, Tara Dee, April 12, to Matthew and NaDina (Tuper) Martin, Croghan, N.Y.

Miehls, Shauna Kristine, April 19, to Kristi (King) and Russ Miehls, Stryker, Ohio.

Miller, Dezaray Faye, April 20, to Diane (Beck) and Wendell Miller, Winona Lake, Ind.

Morrison, Seth Drysdale Smith, April 26, to Gerald Morrison and Barb Smith-Morrison, Winterbourne, Ont.

Perez, Kaleb Alexander, March 24, to Amanda (Bartel) and Derek Perez, Jacksonville, N.C.

Riegsecker, Lauren Michelle, April 8, to Jodi and Ryan Riegsecker, Goshen, Ind.

Shenk, Aaron Mitchell, April 5, to Jeromy and Katrina (Good) Shenk, Manheim, Pa.

Wier, Andrew John, March 20, to Jason and Sheri (Clemmer) Wier, Goshen, Ind.

Williams, Adelaide Lucille, April 5, to Claire (Brubacher) and Wade Williams, Newton, Kan.

Yoder, Evan Keith, March 12, to Brent and Lorie (Sommers) Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Baker/Schneider: David Baker, Greensboro, N.C., and Amy Jo Schneider, Castorland, N.Y., April 28 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, N.Y.

Blank/Horne: Nick Blank, Murdock, Kan., and Tiffany Horne, Hutchinson, Kan., April 14 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Dewerse/Pannabecker: Joanne Dewerse, Auckland, New Zealand, and Tim Pannabecker, Lancaster, Pa., April 7 at Auckland.

Garcia/Hambleton: Marisa Garcia, El Paso, Texas, and Mike Hambleton, Phoenix, April 21 at Gilbert, Ariz.

Gochenaur/Mohler: Scott Gochenaur, Willow Street, Pa., and Jennifer Mohler, Manheim, Pa., April 21 at Lititz (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Lyndaker/Rowsam: Laurie Lyndaker, Croghan, N.Y., and Gene Rowsam, Lowville, N.Y., April 14 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, N.Y.

Turner/Willis: Michael Turner and D'Angela Marie Willis, Pulaski, Iowa, April 21 at Pulaski Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Amos, Nydia, 64, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, died April 6. Spouse: Clifford Amos. Other survivors: children Martin, Jess, Eric, Raymond, Jewel; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 8 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Mount Pleasant.

Bowen, Ethel Farrar, 86, Newport News, Va., died April 13. Parents: William and Mary Farrar (deceased). Survivors: children Donald and Ken; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Denlinger, Elizabeth Hess, 87, Landisville, Pa., died April 13. Spouse: Lloyd Denlinger. Parents: Paul and Susan Herr Hess (deceased). Other survivors: son Robert; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Detweiler, John, 91, Hesston, Kan., died April 19. Spouse: Opal Detweiler. Parents: Valentine and Catherine Slagell Detweiler (deceased). Other survivors: children Patsy Dirks, Ruth Ann Toews, Mary Lee Wiens; seven grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 23 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Eash, Dorothy Rensberger, 93, Kalona, Iowa, died April 12. Spouse: Amelius Eash (deceased). Parents: Ervin and Mary Yoder Rensberger (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Jean Eash Essex, Maynard Eash; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Erb, Virgil, 67, Henderson, Neb., died April 15 of cancer. Spouse: Arlyce Erb. Parents: Mose and Ida Erb (deceased). Other survivors: children Scott, Diana Schunn, Kent; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Esch, Millie, 87, Sarasota, Fla., died April 16 of heart complications. Parents: Joseph and Ella Mae Esch (deceased). Funeral: April 20 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Ewy, Berniece Reif, 97, Moundridge, Kan., died April 6. Spouse: August Ewy (deceased). Parents: John and Mary Ping Reif (deceased). Survivors: children Angie, Lois. Funeral: April 10 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Fast, John, 89, Beatrice, Neb., died April 8. Spouse: Esther Voth Fast. Parents: Gerhard and Helene Andreas Fast (deceased). Other survivors: children Joan Smith, Robert, Vi Juhnke, Vernon; 14 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Friesen, Martha Wall, 74, Henderson, Neb., died April 7. Spouse: Leslie Friesen. Parents: Jacob and Agnes Epp Wall (deceased). Other survivors: children Vicky Mierau, Carey, Robin; six grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Friesen, Lois Musser, 82, Henderson, Neb., died April 7. Spouse: Frank Friesen (deceased). Parents: Steward and Elsie Musser (deceased). Survivors: children Karen Reed, Dona Rose; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 11 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Gonzales, Tony, 54, Phoenix, died April 7. Spouse: Nancy Deswarte Gonzales. Other survivors: children Rebeka, Daniel. Memorial service: April 13 at Sunnyslope Mennonite Church, Phoeniz.

Hochstetler, Harvey, 79, Apple Creek, Ohio, died April 17. Spouse: Nettie Hochstetler (deceased). Parents: Eli and Mattie Hochstetler (deceased). Survivors: children Ken, Roy, Elsie Zuercher, Ron; six grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Horst, Lorne, 92, Baden, Ont., died April 13. Spouse: Iona Meyer Horst. Parents: Enoch and Anna Grem Horst (deceased). Other survivors: children Dennis, Marlene Gingerich; nine grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Labedis, Angela Wallace, 76, Hopedale, Ill., died April 25. Spouse: (1st) Gaylord Wallace (deceased); (2nd) Joseph Labedis (deceased). Survivors: children William Wallace, Joseph Labedis, Angie Miller, Candace Kleen, Joline Labedis, Margaret Wolfe; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 27 at Hopedale.

Landis, Iva, 90, Manheim, Pa., died April 15. Parents: Harnish and Selena Brubaker Landis (deceased). Funeral: April 19 at Manheim.

Litwiller, Isaiah Peter, 89, Kalona, Iowa, died April 8. Spouse: Ruth Rensberger Litwiller (deceased). Parents: John and Delilah Swartzendruber Litwiller (deceased). Survivors: children Stanley, Wilbur, Calvin; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Litwiller, Lyle, 70, Hopedale, Ill., died April 9. Spouse: Loretta Litwiller. Parents: Eli and Fannie Sutter Litwiller (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Warren Darnall, Brian Darnall, Joline Graff, Janet Canfield, Linda England, Debra Yoder; 16 stepgrandchildren; three stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Martin, Lydia Slabaugh, 94, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 26. Spouse: Lewis Martin (deceased). Parents: Moses and Lydia Slabaugh (deceased). Survivors: son Richard; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 30 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Miller, Gaylord, 41, Goshen, Ind., died March 25. Spouse: Kathy Nice Miller. Parents: Melvin and Lavina Herschberger Miller. Other survivors: children Josh, Jen, Steph. Funeral: March 28 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Miller, Velma Bender, 86, Berlin, Ohio, died April 14. Spouse: Daniel Miller (deceased). Parents: Mahlon and Elizabeth Bender (deceased). Survivors: children Louise Dietzel, Grace Ramer, Lois Schlabach; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 18 at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Nofziger, Roy, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died April 10. Spouse: Lucille Frey Nofziger. Parents: Jacob and Caroline Burkholder Nofziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Rodney, Terry, Jueldine Rupp, Jeanne Birky; 13 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 14 at Fairlawn Chapel, Archbold.

Nyce, Irma Bishop, 87, Dublin, Pa., died April 9. Spouse: Lawrence Nyce (deceased). Parents: Henry and Clara Gross Bishop (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Weidman, Mary Lee Chittick, Nancy Friesen, George Nyce; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 13 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Rogalsky, David, 62, Reedley, Calif., died April 23. Spouse: Gracie Flaming Rogalsky. Parents: Heinrich and Anna Rogalsky (deceased). Other survivors: children Shelly Sorensen, Debbie Linman; five grandchildren. Memorial service: April 27 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Sauer, Anne Krehbiel, 78, Moundridge, Kan., died April 20. Spouse: Alfred Sauer. Parents: Nelson and Gladys Krehbiel (deceased). Funeral: April 23 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Shenk, Lydia, 85, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 7. Memorial service: April 9 at Harrisonburg. Funeral: April 10 at Newport News, Va.

Stucky, Esther Ries Kramer, 90, Marion, S.D., died April 5. Spouse: (1st) Fred Kramer (deceased); (2nd) John Stucky (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lydia Schrag Ries (deceased). Funeral: April 7 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Ulrich, Myrtal Harvey, 92, Eureka, Ill., died April 14 of a stroke. Spouse: Wilmer Ulrich (deceased). Parents: David and Caroline Harvey (deceased). Memorial service: April 17 at Maple Lawn Homes, Eureka.

Wyse, Ilva King, 94, Archbold, Ohio, died April 21. Spouse: Leland Wyse. Parents: Harvey and Carrie Rupp King (deceased). Other survivors: children Lowell, Richard, Denver, Everett, Evelyn Grieser, Shirley Shenk, Charlene Steuer; 24 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 25 at Fairlawn Haven Chapel, Archbold.

Yoder, John, 81, Goshen, Ind., died March 29 of a blood clot. Spouse: Millie Eash Yoder. Parents: Jacob and Lovina Helmuth Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Samuel, Clarence, Rhoda Troyer, Rachel Cook; 13 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 2 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

classifieds

- **North Danvers Mennonite Church**, Danvers, Ill., is hosting its ***150th anniversary celebration***, June 15-17, 2001. Request registration forms from North Danvers Sesquicentennial Committee, RR 1 Box 67A, Danvers, IL 61732; 309-963-4554; email <rbucher@frontiernet.net>.

- **Mennonite Voluntary Service** needs ***associate director/unit administrator***. Full-time position beginning August 2001. Experience and commitment to following Jesus in a life of service. Strong communication skills. Openness and interest in traveling. Location of office negotiable.

  Contact MVS office at 316-283-5100 or <mvs@gcmc.org>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.

  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.

  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Fairview Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***lead pastor***, rural area. Interested candidates respond to Pastoral Search Committee, attn. Reuel Detweiler, 1264 E. Helmer Lake Rd., Fairview, MI 48621; 989-848-2305; <rdetweiler@m33access.com>.

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director***, with some worship planning responsibilities.

  Send resume by June 15 to Senior Pastor, Maplewood Mennonite Church, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.

  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***human resources associate director*** for short-term missions to initiate and coordinate short-term missions recruitment and personnel placement and to oversee pastoral care of participants. Discipleship Ministries short-term mission experience preferred.

  Contact Sherill Hostetter at 717-898-2251 or <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Mennonite Conciliation Services** and Eastern College are sponsoring a ***summer mediation and facilitation training institute***, July 16-20, 2001, at Eastern College's campus in St. Davids, Pa. The cost is $450 ($500 for registrations received after June 15); some scholarship assistance is available.

  For more information, visit <www.mcc.org/mcs.html> or contact MCS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-3889; <mcs@mccus.org>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an opening for ***singles*** beginning Sept. 1 and Dec. 1 for a one-year voluntary service assignment.

  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in the ***resource room, 1st grade*** and an anticipated opening in ***middle school history/computer***.

  Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Ready for new opportunities** to serve others? This summer, Mennonite Central Committee needs a service program coordinator to serve in ***Florida***. MCC also needs country representatives to serve for a year, preferably longer, in ***Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania*** and ***Zambia***. Country representatives need to have worked and lived in a culture other than their own for at least a year.

  Please contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>, or the MCC office nearest you to apply for any of these five leadership positions open this summer.

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classifieds

- **Mennonite Media**, Harrisonburg, Va., ***turns 50 this year!*** Join the celebration July 27-29. Former *Mennonite Hour* chorus and ensemble members are invited to sing in a reunion chorus on Friday evening, July 27. There will be an open house at Mennonite Media 2:00-5:00 p.m., Saturday, July 28.

  For more information, call 800-999-3534; <loish@mennomedia.org>.

- **Mount Pleasant Christian School**, a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.

  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **Lancaster Mennonite School**, Lancaster, Pa., has the following teaching positions available for the fall: ***6th grade, math, Spanish, Bible, girls health and physical education, computer applications, boys and girls dorm advisers***.

  For information, contact Richard Thomas, 717-299-0436, ext. 301, or <thomasjr@lmhs.com>.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology, chemistry, mathematics/science, Bible/social studies***.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions**, Salunga, Pa., seeks ***events coordinator*** to plan and coordinate public events and to assist with constituent relations activities. Exceptional communication, relational and organizational abilities required, as well as strong skill bases in multitasking and word processing. Occasional weekend/evening work required. Position begins July 2, 2001.

  Contact Sherill at 717-898-2251 or <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Are you, or someone you know, a manager**, administrator or leader with two or more years of experiencing living and working overseas? If so, Mennonite Central Committee invites you or your colleague to apply for one of the numerous MCC leadership openings. This year MCC needs leaders for ***El Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, south Florida, Colombia, Vietnam, Laos and Egypt***. Leadership openings in 2002 include, among others, ***Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Philippines and Bolivia***.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Beth Haven Nursing Home** seeks a ***comptroller***. Responsibilities will include management of the business office, personnel administration and purchasing. The position will report to the chief executive officer and respond to the board of directors. Qualifications should include knowledge of fund accounting, healthcare finance and personnel administration, and have a business orientation. The candidate should be computer literate, innovative, organized, self-motivated, handle multiple projects, mission oriented and have a Christian commitment. Salary and benefits will be competitive and based upon experience and education.

  Send resume and salary history to Chief Executive Officer, Beth Haven, 2500 Pleasant St., Hannibal, MO 63401-2699. EOE

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.

  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English; interest in directing musical/drama also desired. One year, full-time.

  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.

  Other positions available: ***keyboarding and intro computer instructor, assistant boys' resident director, head tutor, kitchen assistant, coaches*** (head girls' soccer, head girls' basketball, JV boys' soccer).

  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Newton, Kan., a congregation of about 600 members, invites applicants for full-time ***associate pastor***. Assignment will be in two of the following three fields of ministry: nurture, outreach or worship/music.

  Send cover letter and resume to Church Staff Committee, First Mennonite Church, 429 E. 1st St., Newton, KS 67114; <ratzlaff@southwind.net>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Kelowna, B.C., is searching for a ***pastor***. We are a relatively small congregation with less than 100 members and adherents. Our facility has ample space to accommodate new growth. While many of our members are retired from full-time employment, we are interested in reaching out to the community and meeting the needs of younger families. Our Sunday morning services use a traditional style of worship that is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist faith. We actively support the programs of MCC and the Mennonite church conferences.

  Potential pastoral candidates who are interested in learning more about us may contact Jake Thiessen, 10418 Tyndal Road, Lake Country, BC V4V 2K7; 250-766-1938; <jthiessen@umagroup.com>.

- **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** to serve churches in Michigan. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to help strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus. The person will serve up to 35 congregations and their pastors and be a member of the ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2002, and will have some theological educational and professional training with at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

  Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references to IN-MI Conference Search Committee, c/o Jerry Albrecht, 1427 McCormick Dr., Nappanee, IN 46550, by June 22, 2001. For more information, call or email Jerry Albrecht at 219-773-7633 or <Albrecht@maplenet.net>.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** is seeking a ***professor of pastoral care***, a full-time position at the level of assistant or associate professor, beginning Feb. 1, 2002. This person will teach in the areas of pastoral care, pastoral counseling and spiritual formation; administer the spiritual formation program at AMBS; and promote these AMBS programs to prospective students. Qualifications include effectiveness in working with at least one of the fields of pastoral care, pastoral counseling and spiritual formation; strong personal commitment to Christ, the church and the mission of AMBS; an advanced degree in an appropriate field or current candidacy in a degree program; commitment to preparing lay leaders and pastors for a missional church; and knowledge of and commitment to work within the structures of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. AMBS does not discriminate with regard to race, gender, color, national origin, age or disability. Men and members of under-represented groups are especially encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three reference letters by June 15, 2001, to Dr. Loren L. Johns, Dean, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; <ljohns@ambs.edu>. For further information see <www.ambs.edu/jobpostings.htm>.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community** seeks a ***vice president for health services***, an experienced, motivated leader for an executive level position as chief director for health services. Must have values and background to support the mission of a nonprofit Christian organization dedicated to the care of older adults. Provides leadership in developing vision, strategies and programs to enhance the health and wellness of people served by VMRC on its campus and in the community. Must possess master's degree in relevant health field from an accredited college or university and five years experience administering institutional and community-based health and wellness programs and services. Directs health, nursing care, assisted living, dining, volunteer, counseling and wellness programs and services development.

  Send resume and cover letter stating health service and wellness philosophy to Director of Human Resources, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2452; fax 540-564-3700; email <hr@vmrc.org>; web site <www.vmrc.org>. Deadline for applications May 25, 2001. VMRC is an equal opportunity employer. Multiethnic people invited to apply.

by Gordon Houser

On a rainy afternoon, April 23, I took the #180 bus from downtown Minneapolis to one of the largest temples in the United States. This edifice includes almost 5 million square feet over four levels. Between 35 and 42 million visitors come to it each year, it employs more than 12,000 people and takes in $1.5 billion annually.

This temple is the Mall of America (MOA), which opened in August 1992 and attracts more worshipers (er, visitors) annually than Disney World, Graceland and the Grand Canyon combined. Malls are a pervasive presence in our cities and serve as markers for the consumerism that affects us all.

I was in Minneapolis for the annual convention of Associated Church Press, of which *The Mennonite* is a member publication. ACP planners had invited a representative from the Mall Area Religious Council (MARC) to speak with us before we ventured into this huge complex of more than 500 stores and amusements.

Marker: The LEGO® Imagination Center at Mall of America

Gordon Houser

MARC is "a gathering of world religion congregations that have chosen to move beyond tolerance into the realm of mutual respect," according to its brochure. They have a presence at MOA through The Meaning Store, <www.meaningstore.org/marc.htm>, and a "Where to Worship" signboard. Ongoing programs include ElderExpo, YouthExpo and the "Holy Days and Holidays Around the World" display.

The representative from MARC told us that MOA is like a domed city that represents many of us. He encouraged us to "look at the people there and see reflections of yourself." MARC began partly in response to a desire by the manager of MOA to have a religious presence at the Mall.

I thought, I can turn up my nose at such a grand display of American consumerism and decry its influence, but I have to admire these people who seek to go where people are and try to bring some meaning into their lives. After all, isn't recreational shopping a misguided search for meaning?

I spent a couple of hours at MOA, researching this piece, of course. Besides a headache, I got some exercise. I had learned that if you walk around MOA on all four levels, you will have gone 4.3 miles. By the time I got back on the bus to return to my hotel, I was tired—physically and spiritually. The abundance of stores at MOA can feel overwhelming and pose a threat to simply walking with Jesus. It also mirrors our culture and, too often, ourselves—our habits and desires.

books

Journey Into Joy: Stations of the Resurrection by Andrew Walker (Paulist Press, 2001, $21.95) is a beautiful book of classical paintings, Scripture and writings by a variety of authors, from St. Augustine to Maya Angelou, St. Anselm to Julia Esquival, George Herbert to Walt Whitman. Walker writes, "These meditations attempt to help redress the balance between Lent and Easter and to recapture for the church something of the energy and grace that lie for us in potential and which could surely make apostles of us all." This is a book worth sitting with during and beyond the Easter season.

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Preach what we practice

We can build hospitals and schools and hand out relief supplies. But most of us do not know how to lead another person to Jesus.

Mennonites know how to do service projects. We know how to work at justice. We know how to be peacemakers. We can build hospitals and schools and hand out relief supplies. But most of us do not know how to lead another person to Jesus. And, frankly, it has been easier just to send money to the mission agencies and let them speak for us.

Indeed, in 1999 members of our three denominations sent $19.3 million to support the work of the mission agencies (see chart below). This is a remarkable investment in mission. However, the mission agencies are now poised to challenge congregations and individuals in new ways. In addition to ongoing financial support for mission work around the world, their leaders also want us to get personally involved in mission across the street. If this dream comes true, then we will become what has been dubbed a "missional" church.

"In much of the last century, mission was owned and managed by the mission agencies," explains Stanley Green, who was recently appointed to lead the new mission center for Mennonite Church USA. "We courted and cajoled congregations to contribute financial resources that we administered and managed. Now we understand that mission belongs to the local congregation. Our role is to empower and release the energy in the congregation for mission initiatives."

This new orientation will change the strategies of mission agencies as they are re-formed in the integration process. Those espousing this change believe that by calling the new denomination to be missional in every way possible, congregational life and individual faith will be transformed. It is based on an assumption that every Mennonite congregation will become a center of mission. If this idea carries the day, then we will belong to a church that expects each member to be a mission worker.

For more than 100 years, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church mission workers have carried the gospel around the world. Most of us grew up hearing stories of how the good news was planted and bore fruit in places we never visit. In large part because of these efforts, the Mennonite world family now numbers almost a million members with the majority living south of the equator.

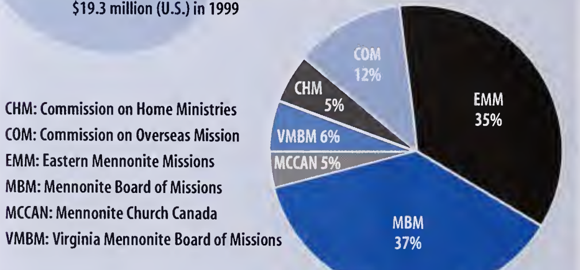
We continue to give money to the agencies that have the international expertise to send workers to appropriate places. But the pattern is changing. Mennonite sisters and brothers from other continents are now coming to the United States as missionaries. They point out that our culture and society need the message of salvation just as much as any other place in the world.

If the merger of our denominations transforms little else in our traditions except our personal orientation to mission, then it will have been successful. There are reasons to expect that the change can happen. Clearly, the membership of the new Mennonite Church is committed to mission. However, it will be a tall task to help congregations and individuals begin proclaiming to neighbors the message we have supported elsewhere around the world. It will be incumbent on our mission agencies to give congregations and individuals the tools to become missional. Our entire church structure will need to be oriented to the mission task. Many of us will be forced out of our comfort zones. As others have noted, we must learn to preach what we practice.

If these changes happen, then the merger process will transform us all in ways never imagined when we started down the road to the new Mennonite Church USA.—*ejt*

Contributions to mission agencies

$19.3 million (U.S.) in 1999



Source: Mission Transformation Project

the Mennonite

May 22, 2001

Godspell
the musical becomes a ministry

page 8

6 Teachers and learners in vital community
10 Women envision theology of service
11 T.I.M.E. is on Alabama children's side
20 Death takes a holiday

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Building bridges and walking together

I would say Tobin Miller Shearer has provided us a new look at a truth that is in front of us all the time ("Following 'Fake Latinos,' " May 1). The truth he is pointing out is that none of us can fully experience anything exactly like another person. We are so conscious of those differences that a whole series of books has been written on birth order. Whole schools of thinking have become associated with certain development and learning theories. Whether our environment or heredity shapes us more is one kind of question that is discussed a lot. And when Shearer throws in the race issue, another book or school of thought pops up.

What he says is true. Even though we have lived in another person's country, state, city or house for many years, we will never fully know what that person feels. We can build bridges, but I will never be able to live in another person's skin or get in their head. So, even after I have walked a second mile in your shoes, you will still be you and I will still be me. We may, however, have walked over the same bridge together, and so we might have a better perspective on the other's point of view. If we choose the same bridge, we will be closer together at the end of the walk.

Thanks for the reminder to build bridges and to keep walking together.—*David Hiebert, Scottdale, Pa.*

Step up, step down on the environment

About a month ago, George W. Bush announced the U.S. government position to once again refuse to join more than 100 nations worldwide in committing to reduce release of global warming gases. Attitudes abroad (as here in northeast Brazil) toward Americans were mixed before, but they are worse now. We are thoroughly ashamed. Does it make sense for a nation with one of the world's largest, most stable economies to claim economic concerns as justification for not helping to reduce a global problem to which it contributes in proportions second to no other country?

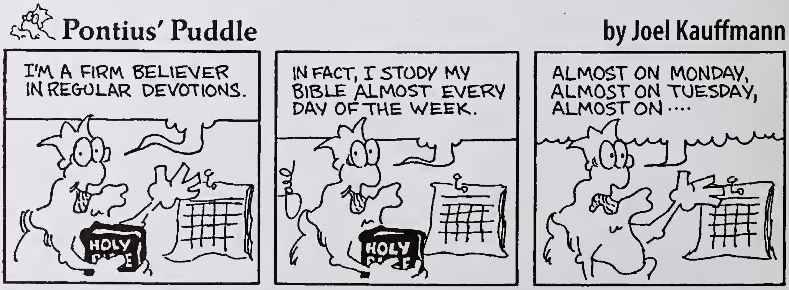
Does Bush think other countries' leaders are not concerned about their economies? Obviously they think the problem merits their sacrifice, so why not also the United States? Already, climatic stability and precipitation have dropped as never before in this semi-arid region of Brazil where we live and work. Does Bush think other nations have been duped by foolish scientists (American ones included)?

Have you told your elected officials what you think about this matter? Please join us in doing so. If we hope to survive in the long term and have a place as respected world leaders in the short term, U.S. citizens must speak up so that their officials step down from their arrogant pedestals and make sure that our government is more responsive to global concerns.

This is not strictly a matter of politics and foreign affairs; it is the godly business of respecting and loving our (global) neighbors, showing mercy, sharing the wealth of God's creation and caring for it. We feel that it is long overdue for members of all Christian churches to repent of their complicity in unbridled global warming and to stand up to speak truth to corporate and illusive democratic power.—*Tim and Anita Eisenbeis, Recife, Brazil*

No proof

Re the letter on justice for women pastors with many signatures (Readers Say, May 8): More than 25 years ago, many of us were opposed to women in the pastorate because the written Word of God prohibits it. At that time, we received rebuke because we were arrogant and convinced our interpretation of the Bible


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
I'M A FIRM BELIEVER IN REGULAR DEVOTIONS.
HOLY
IN FACT, I STUDY MY BIBLE ALMOST EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK.
HOLY
ALMOST ON MONDAY, ALMOST ON TUESDAY, ALMOST ON ....

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theMennonite

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

ay readers say

was the only one. Through the years since that time, as conferences have continued to ordain women to the pastorate, if we continued to object or raise the issue, many people considered us intolerant and unwilling to put up with "diversity of the Spirit" and so on. If we continue to oppose women's ordination at the current time, we are committing injustice against these women.

Please don't misunderstand me: I do not mind the absoluteness of the claim. I agree that if God calls women to be pastors and I am against this, I am resisting God. I am just frustrated that when I claimed that ordination of women was a type of truth claim instead of a full-fledged refutation of my position, what I got were counterarguments clothed in the garments of diversity, tolerance and so on. Now that women's ordination is more widely accepted, the garments are changed and these proponents of women's ordination abandon talk of diversity or multiple interpretations and insist that their position is true and mine is false. It seems that we merely put off the conflict rather than resolving it.

Almost 2,000 years ago, the apostle Paul said, "I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man." I believed this 25 years ago, and I believe it still and am not ashamed to believe it. An accusation of injustice against me without clear biblical proof does not move me.—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

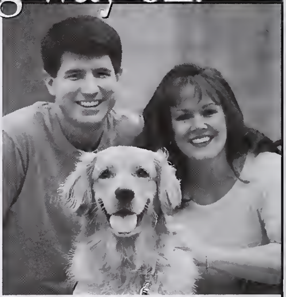
By what name?

I was surprised and disappointed that Ryan Ahlgrim used derogatory slang for a white person in his winning limerick ("The Limericks of Jesus," April 17). Surely he would not use such a derogatory name for a black, Asian or Mexican. Why a white person?—*Bob Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Brian D. Stucky

Retirement seems a long way off.

Do we need to be concerned about it now?



The simple answer is "yes!" But, life is not so simple. While people say you need to begin planning, saving, and investing now for the future, what's often not so clear is "why" and "how."

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Second morning song from Oneonta

by Jeff Gundy

So early the black flies are still asleep.
A high scruff of rock where lovers

carved their names and then slipped back
into the soft needles under the trees.

Already the valley hums and crackles
and the last rolls of mist hang over

the smokestacks like those fine scratches
that pile up on your glasses. God said,

the places that please you will often
be difficult to find. God said, sweat

is a good sign but not reliable.
God said, hold this day like an egg,

hold and cherish it as you dream
of being touched yourself. Break the day

but gently as the great chef breaks eggs
for the dish you cannot name or afford.

God says all this has been given you,
the whine of the crane and the whir of engines

pulling tired women to their bad jobs
and the drumlin where the last glacier

gave up its journey and grumbled away.
God says remember, God says

don't give up. God says give up.

Jeff Gundy teaches English at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

St. Mary's spire

by Amy Spencer

Straight
into
blank
Iowa sky she thrusts head and weatherworn
hands
above river and field and town
ushering
onward
tired
faithful:
Live
past this hail
Live
through that
drought
Live
for this
present century
Live
in spite
of appearances
and for
appearances
and for signs
and wonders
from heaven
above
and
for earth
below

Amy Spencer lives in Riverside, Iowa.

David Hiebert

Teachers and learners in vital community

The vision of the first inner-city Mennonite high school in the country

by Polly Ann Brown

Seven years ago, I joined others who were dreaming of and making plans for a Mennonite high school in Philadelphia. Over the years I had become aware of striking connections between sound educational principles and key themes of the Mennonite faith: community, mutuality, justice, peace and service. According to many scholars, these themes are the roots of an educational program that has the potential to address the needs for excellence and equity.

Coutesy photo

Students rise to the level of expectations, and we must believe that all can achieve at high levels. Excellence is the standard and time is the variable.

—Barbara Moses, principal at Philadelphia Mennonite High School

I had witnessed teachers living out this unnamed vision in Mennonite schools. Now I was sharing in the dream of bringing together the central themes of a living, biblical faith as understood by Mennonites among a culturally, diverse community of learners, in an urban setting.

Eight months before the school opened, we asked Barbara Moses to consider becoming our principal. At first she said no. A week later she called back and said, "The Lord won't let me rest. … Let's talk." We did. We asked Barbara, "If you could do whatever you wanted, no holds barred, what would you do in this school?"

This was part of her response: "Teachers, parents and students would have a say in the program. Learning would be hands-on, experiential. Students would solve real-life problems. We would travel a lot. … Students would be doing history, not just reading about it. We would use Scripture as a text for many subjects; it's a rich source of literature, history, timelines and events. We would have students involved with on-job placements, internships. Teachers would be engaged in ongoing professional development. We would look at mathematics as patterns … make it more concrete, put it in real context. Students rise to the level of expectations, and we must believe that all can achieve at high levels. Excellence is the standard and time is the variable. Some might take more time, but we will be there to help them."

We hired Barbara. In September 1998, at 24th and Poplar streets in Philadelphia, the doors of an old Ukranian church-school building, unused for 10 years, swung open. More than 50 young people—African-Americans, Asians, Latinos and Caucasians—neatly outfitted in navy-and-white professional attire, were greeted by a few staff members, five teachers and Barbara. Philadelphia Mennonite High School (PMHS) began its first day of classes. The first inner-city Mennonite high school in the country was officially open. Lancaster Conference bishop Luke Stoltzfus and his wife, Miriam, saw their dream for a Mennonite high school in Philadelphia become reality.

Economic reasons: In a 1974 commentary for *Missionary Messenger*, Luke wrote, "It is not consistent with the nature of brotherhood in the church for some families to enjoy the privilege of Christian day schools while others cannot, primarily for economic reasons." We believed that with God's help we could attract outside donors so that we could reach students regardless of their ability to pay tuition.

We planned to offer students an experiential, inquiry-based, interdisciplinary educational program. By the end of the first month of school, it was clear that students and teachers were actively engaged in the educational venture we had envisioned.

Around the theme of water, students visited the Southeast Water Waste Treatment Plant, the Seaport Museum, a wildlife preserve and Bartram Gardens. They identified trees, learned about ecological succession and navigable resources. They learned about mixing compost, testing water quality for nitrates and phosphates, and learned that waste water does

We planned to offer students an experiential, inquiry-based, interdisciplinary educational program. By the end of the first month of school, it was clear that students and teachers were actively engaged in the educational venture we had envisioned.

not go away; it ends up someplace—hopefully not in the water we use for brushing our teeth.

Service learning, a theme in American education and one of Pennsylvania's state standards, has become a theme at PMHS. Students have a variety of opportunities to participate in service to the larger community.

Before their visit to a nursing home to assist folks during a picnic, students learned about Alzheimer's and other diseases that afflict the elderly, and they were sensitized through simulation activities to certain forms of physical limitations.

Faith and learning: These are a few examples of the ways we have witnessed the vision coming to life in the educational program. Yet the integration of faith and learning cuts beneath theories and methodologies and curriculum. Recently a mother told me what she wants most for her third grade son at school: "I want his teacher to know who he is," she said.

In the Hebrew Bible, knowing ("yada") embraces the whole person in community. In his book *To Know As We Are Known*, Parker Palmer points to an education in which "intellect and spirit would be one, teachers and learners and subjects would be in vital community with one another, and a world in need of healing would be well served."

In the end, this is what it comes down to. When I have been too long in my office, in my head, seduced by theories and so-called revolutionary ideas, I know it's time for a trip to PMHS. I know I need to be reminded that it's about people—teachers, students and parents—who day after day struggle, despair and find hope again.

Learning how to give: I walk into the school building and see a student I have come to know. We talk about his recent success at a mock trial at the Temple University Law School. I know something of the difficulties and complexities of his life. I know also he is respected and inspired by family members and educators who understand that life outside school and inside school is inseparable. I know he has been given much and in return is learning how to give.

One of our teachers, Steve Schrag, in a recent email message, had this to say about his experience at PMHS:

"The first day was nerve-racking, even with it just being faculty and staff. I was astonished at the openness of my new co-workers, at how free they were to share. ... I truly felt like I was welcomed into a great big family ... whose shared goal and vision was to not only teach subject matter but also the gospel and to model their own Christian values. We also met incoming students and parents during that first week, and right away I knew this was the setting for me. Clearly God had placed me here at PMHS. I was meeting students who came from all different types of family backgrounds and structures and was able to share in their lives."

Great respect: "The school year has only gotten better. ... The students show each other and everyone in the building great respect. They express hope, visions of their own and desires to achieve outside our school family. I have been welcomed into this loving family ... as a believer in Christ who shares the ideas and visions of all who enter the doors."

When the going gets tough, when the financial picture looks bleak (as it does now), when there are interpersonal conflicts, I cling to Steve's reference to those involved with the work of the high school as family. Although family is the place where pain and alienation are most profoundly felt, it is also the place where God's grace, healing and redemption can be incarnated most radically. PMHS is one of the places I go to be renewed in this truth.

Polly Ann Brown is a board member at PMHS, and a member of Norristown (Pa.) New Life Mennonite Church.

For more information about PMHS or to send contributions, write:

Barbara Moses, Principal
Philadelphia Mennonite High School
860 N. 24th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19130.

Godspell
the musical becomes a ministry

by Brian D. Stucky

Can you praise God in a public school? Students at Goessel (Kan.) High School found out the answer was an emphatic yes. They sang, lifted arms and swirled on the stage to the joyous sounds of the 1970s' Broadway musical and movie *Godspell* while evoking streams of tears from adults in the audience.

The music department of the Kansas high school of 110 students undertook the ambitious musical last fall under the direction of Greg Bontrager, the school's vocal music director. A surprise came with the profound spiritual experience felt by cast, crew, director and audience that had the community buzzing for weeks after the final curtain.

Godspell is an artistic improvisation of the Gospel of Matthew. An inner-city drama troupe of disciples in colorful costumes portrays the Gospel's parables. Near the end comes the startling crucifixion scene. The group will take the performance to the Mennonite convention in Nashville in July for three shows.

Most of the cast members attend one of the three Mennonite churches in the Goessel area: Alexanderwohl, Goessel or Tabor. Others attend Hesston Inter-Mennonite Fellowship, and one cast member attends a Baptist church in Newton.

"I found myself in tears just watching rehearsals," says Greg, a member of Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan. "It is so powerful, and the kids are so expressive for [their age]."

Spirit of love: An unexpected result was that the cast was drawn so closely together by the performance that so warmly portrays the spirit of love shared by Jesus' disciples. Early in the rehearsals, Greg asked the cast to do a "group hug" exercise to get into the spirit of the play. The cast also practiced each song in a circle to foster closeness.

"By the end, at the performances, the cast was tight, and early differences melted away," says Greg.

"We stayed after performances until midnight just talking," says cast member Ami Miller.

The music is the hallmark of *Godspell*. Young people discover and middle-aged adults delight again in songs such as the touching "Day By Day," the prophetic "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord" and the high-energy "God Save the People," "O Bless the Lord My Soul" and "Light of the World." Other tunes include the rollicking "We Beseech Thee," the jazzy call for repentance, "Turn Back, O Man," the thankful "All Good Gifts" and the heartfelt "By My Side" and "On the Willows," as Jesus says goodbye to his disciples on the night he is betrayed.

Godspell was not intended to be a religious experience at all, according to Greg. It resulted from the composer's master's thesis in theater, which focused on the personal relationships between a character and his friends—Jesus and his disciples. Stephen Schwartz intended to lead the audience on a roller coaster of emotions. Originally the setting of the parables of Matthew was incidental. But the great music and the truths of the gospel shine through so strongly that anyone with a Christian faith will have that faith strengthened. Anyone with little or no faith will meet the gospel of Jesus Christ head-on and be drawn in by *Godspell*'s warmth.

Unexpected insights: The experience gave unexpected faith insights to the students. "My relationship with God grew, and it gave me a whole new understanding of the crucifixion," says Bethany Amstutz. "When Nick Schroeder (Jesus) was being crucified, it was like, he was our best friend, how could this be? And then you think of how it must have been for the disciples."

Nick echoes the feeling of the disciples and says, "In terms of faith, all the stuff you learned in Bible school comes alive. You read your lines and realize it's all in the Bible."

Memorable moments abound for the cast. For Katherine Krehbiel, it was hitting the final curtain as she sang "Day By Day," nearly choking up, realizing the play was ending and everything led up to that moment. "It was an awesome experience. It changed my life."

Other students were also changed. "Before, you talked to a person for minutes, and now I realize it takes hours to get to really know them," says Jeff Franzen. "We got to see what it was like for the disciples going through the crucifixion," says Zac Church. "The other cast members brought out the best in me," says Vaughn Miller.

"Before, I didn't think I needed to go to a church to worship God," says Tara Goerzen. "Now I want to go to church. I joined the praise team, and it's made a whole difference in my church life."

> When Nick Schroeder (Jesus) was being crucified, it was like, he was our best friend, how could this be? And then you think of how it must have been for the disciples.
>
> —*Bethany Amstutz*

Goessel (Kan.) high school students will bring their version of the Broadway musical to Nashville in July for the Mennonite convention.

"My relationship with God has grown," says Kenton Nickel, who played dual roles of John the Baptist and Judas. "The parables came to life, but I also identified a little with Judas and understood his role in the grand scheme of things."

The mostly adult audience was moved to tears at each performance. Even Goessel's teachers, whom the students had never seen cry, were misty-eyed.

"Boy, we really got to them," says Sara Ratzlaff. "I knew going in it was going to change people," says Jeremy Miller. Fellow students came up to Katie Schroeder and confessed, "You don't know how this changed my life."

Brian D. Stucky

The Bible comes alive: Nick Schroeder plays Jesus in *Godspell.*

One young adult came up to congratulate the cast with tears in his eyes. As a result he attended the Urbana, Ill., student mission conference last December.

Cast members ran into audience members on the street that they did not even know. "Some people come up to you at [the grocery store] and say, 'You were in *Godspell*, weren't you?' and you could see how they felt," says Ben Schmidt. "God had a part in it."

One adult said, "It went from being a musical to a ministry."

Separation of church and state was not an issue in the school, which has 58 percent Mennonite students. Many types of religious activities, including prayer, are allowable in a public school at certain times, as long as they are voluntary and not coerced, according to Supreme Court rulings (see the booklet "Religious Expression in Public Schools" by the U.S. Department of Education).

Greg says: "Just because a song or musical happens to have religious content doesn't mean it must be excluded from a public school. Some of the greatest music literature of all time is religious."

As Greg realized that most of the cast would attend Nashville with their church youth groups, he developed the idea to take *Godspell* on the road to share at the convention. The cast was ecstatic at hearing the news that they were invited to have an opportunity to perform in a room large enough to seat an audience of 6,400. The production will be staged July 3-5 at Nashville. To help defray costs, they will give several Kansas-area performances.

Many voiced wishes that they could bring the same powerful feeling to Nashville that the audience experienced at Goessel.

One lingering memory for the cast took place in the warm-up room before the last Goessel performance. The singing simply came to a stop because the singers were all choked up. "We realized the play was coming to the end, and we didn't want it to," says Melinda Stucky. Now, as *Godspell* hits the road to Nashville, it doesn't have to—at least for a while.

Brian D. Stucky lives in Goessel, Kan.

My relationship with God has grown. The parables came to life, but I also identified a little with Judas.

—Kenton Nickel

Women envision theology of service at fifth conference

WATERLOO, Ont.—It was a short history lesson. Mary Malone opened the fifth Women Doing Theology conference on May 4 by reviewing the recorded accounts of women's service in the church. There aren't any.

"Women's deeds have not been found worthy of remembrance, from A.D. 35 to about this evening," said the retired religious studies professor at the University of Waterloo.

The Women Doing Theology conference offered participants the chance to explore faith from the perspectives of Anabaptist women. About 160 people attended the two-day event, held at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo.

The church has viewed women as designed by God for servitude, noticeable only if they refused to serve in their prescribed roles, Malone said. Theirs were not holy works, not ministry and would not bring women closer to God, she said. Instead, their service was a form of penitence for being female.

Malone said it took "charismatic works of eschatological maximalism," that is, Spirit-led stepping outside the boundaries of accepted behavior, for women to begin to choose their own forms of service and to answer God's call for their lives.

"Undoing the works of women has had its day," Malone said. "We need to learn a new approach to service, one rooted in love, choice and mutuality."

In the second session, Lydia Neufeld Harder, professor at the Toronto Mennonite Theological Centre, sketched three models of power relationships in service: service from beneath (one is forced to serve those higher on the social scale), service from above (from a place of privilege the server chooses to aid the "needy") and service based on equal status (service is freely shared between friends). Jesus exemplified the third model, treating his disciples not as servants but as friends and teaching them that givers must also be receivers, Harder said.

The third speaker, Alix Lozano, director of the Mennonite seminary in Bogotá, Colombia, explored the meaning of service from the context of the violence taking place in her country. She encouraged others to join the witness of her church as "communities of Jubilee … a community where crying with those who cry is a distinctive regular practice."

Meetinghouse photo by Cathleen Hockman-Wert

Carol Glyn-Williams from Waterloo, Ont. (left), and Gudrun Matthies from Ephrata, Pa., knot one of four comforters completed during the Women Doing Theology conference held May 4-5 in Waterloo, Ont.

"We thank God for calling us to serve—to recuperate the land, to liberate the oppressed, to support those in mourning, to have the bread we need each day, to proclaim the day of the Lord," Lozano said. "To serve God is to serve the poor of the Third World."

Keynote addresses were accompanied by personal stories of serving and being served, of experiencing inclusion and exclusion. Storytellers were Marion Wiens, Techumseh, Ont.; Eunice Valenzuela and Mary Stewart, both from Kitchener, Ont.; and Jenn Thiessen, Toronto.

Conference organizers invited women to knot comforters during and between presentations. "Sewing is one of the pieces of service women have given the church for a long time," Gloria Kropf Nafziger told participants, noting that many people like to keep their hands busy while they think.

The conference concluded with a concert by singer-songwriter Cate Friesen and the auction of a quilted wall hanging made by women from Nairn Mennonite Church, Ailsa Craig, Ont. Proceeds will help women from the Southern Hemisphere attend the next Mennonite World Conference assembly.

Women Doing Theology conferences have been held about every other year since 1992. The next conference will be held in 2003 in Akron, Pa.—*Cathleen Hockman-Wert for Meetinghouse*

Two churches merge into one in Illinois

Two Illinois congregations have taken the merger of their denominations to the local level. Flanagan Mennonite Church and Waldo Mennonite Church, located two miles apart near Flanagan, last month commemorated their closure and the formation of a new congregation, Prairieview Mennonite Church.

Flanagan was a member of Central District Conference, while Waldo was a member of Illinois Conference. Prairieview will seek dual-conference affiliation.

Flanagan, with 69 members, and Waldo, with 96, started discussing the merger in 1999. Both congregations in January approved the creation of the new congregation. Prairieview will meet in the Waldo church building until a decision is made about future facilities. —*Central District Conference Reporter*

TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • May 2001 • Issue 6

Looking forward with hope

Woven in with worship at the 45th annual session of the Central District Conference in Bluffton, Ohio, in March were business sessions, workshops, communion, stories of God's grace, fellowship and food, laughter and joy, and serious reflection and discernment.

In this context, the delegate body unanimously adopted a resolution of intent for their conference to become a member of Mennonite Church USA:

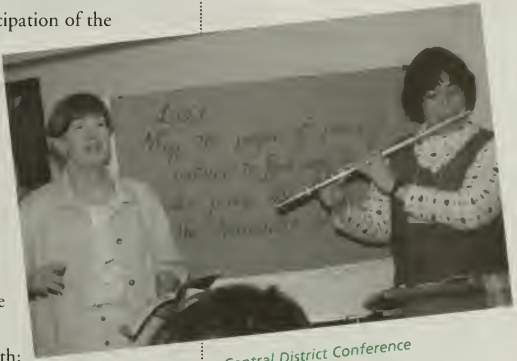
> *"We, the delegate body of the Central District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, declare the intent of the Central District Conference to join Mennonite Church USA. Central District Conference with its member churches will become part of Mennonite Church USA upon the approval of the Plan of Merger by the General Conference delegate body in July of 2001. We look forward with hope and anticipation to our membership in Mennonite Church USA."*

We want this resolution to assure other Mennonite conferences in the United States of Central District Conference's faith in the discernment that has led us to the decision-making moment at Nashville, and to signal that CDC desires to affirm and cooperate with the emerging Mennonite Church USA. We envision gathering in Nashville with the expectation that a "new thing" is being birthed by God.

Additionally, the Board of Directors of Central District Conference commends the membership guidelines and proposed Plan of Merger to our congregational delegates for affirmation. We believe that the work of the Transformation Team and the Executive Board of MC USA is providing us with insightful leadership for a new century and a new church.

Janeen Bertsche Johnson, outgoing CDC president, voiced the health, vitality and anticipation of the conference through the words of Vision: Healing and Hope. "There is generosity of spirit evident throughout the conference; there is creativity in witnessing to faith; people are being called to be followers of Jesus Christ. God's healing and hope is flowing through us, transforming us and our world."

Lloyd L. Miller is the conference minister of the Central District Conference.



Central District Conference representatives Mary Lehman Yoder and Janeen Bertsche Johnson lead the Constituency Leaders Council in worship in Kansas City in March.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Imagine

Imagine a church where, instead of striking out, you get a second chance — and God's mercy spreads across the street and around the world.

Imagine if your church's members share more with their neighbors than a privacy fence — and their sharing the good news of Jesus Christ spreads across the street and around the world.

As Mennonites gather to form a new denomination in Nashville, Tenn., some may fear losing cherished parts of the past. But the primary reason for creating a new Mennonite Church is the vision for "every congregation and all parts of the church to be fully engaged in God's mission, reaching from across the street to around the world."

As we enter a new era in our life together as a people of God, we are following Jesus' lead in imagining what our future might look like. Stanley W. Green, executive director of the new mission agency, identified his first priority: "to seek the face of God" in shaping the new system. "I want to understand what is God's purpose and plan for mission by Mennonites in the 21^{st} century," he said.

Come, share your vision for mission across the street and around the world.

Stanley W. Green has been named executive director of the new mission agency.

Mennonite Church USA

TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • May 2001
Page one and four photos – Laurie Oswald, Mennonite Weekly Review; Page two – Tom Price; Page three – Joanne Dietzel (top) and Gary Kauffman (bottom).

Printed in U.S.A.

Transformation team completes work

The U.S. Transformation Team, a group of 10 persons who have given leadership to churchwide transformation efforts in the United States since the St. Louis 99 Assembly, completed its work in a late March meeting. "When the team was commissioned, no one, including the members of the team, had any concept of the amount of work, investment of time and labor, and personal commitment that would be required," said Jim Schrag, executive director designate of Mennonite Church USA.

The U.S. Transformation Team completed its work in March. The team included (from left) Ted Stuckey, Donella Clemens, Jim Harder, Ron Byler, Tim Burkholder, Jim Schrag, Karl Sommers and Miriam Martin (George Stoltzfus and Dwight McFadden also served on the USTT but are not pictured here).

Jim said the work to form a new church that is equipped to be a part of God's mission in the world goes far beyond the Transformation Team. This work has included hundreds of church leaders in area conferences and churchwide agencies throughout the country who have contributed their time and energy in ways that are unparalleled in our church's history. "This could not have happened without Spirit direction and anointing," he said.

In laying down its work as a transformation team, members expressed their hope that they have helped the church establish a clear identity, organized in a way that will encourage building relationships across cultural, geographical and theological boundaries, and built in opportunities for love to be expressed in service. The work of the Transformation Team in guiding transformation efforts has now become the responsibility of the MC USA Executive Board.

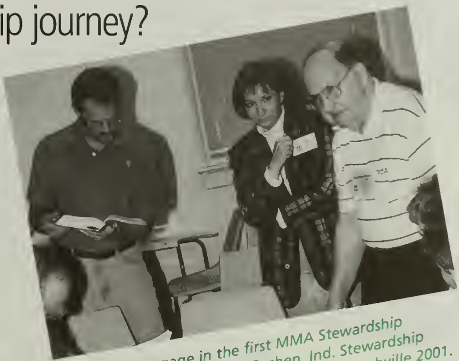
What's happening on your stewardship journey?

What are the stewardship issues in your life? Do they involve your time, talent, money and health? Whatever they are, Mennonite Mutual Aid wants to support you and others in your congregation on your lifelong stewardship journey.

MMA will be pleased to serve as the agency that provides holistic stewardship ministries to the new Mennonite Church USA.

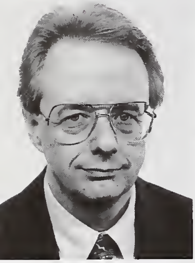
The new traveling MMA Stewardship University and the Stewardship Education Center will provide education and resources to the new church. MMA will continue to offer practical tools, products and services to assist church members and organizations to practice faith through everyday decisions.

"MMA is an innovative organization and represents a positive example of organization and service," said Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director designate in his comments about MMA to the MC USA Executive Board. "They are a vital stewardship resource to all parts of Mennonite Church USA. We extend our thanks to them for their faithful service and depend on their future innovations."



Participants engage in the first MMA Stewardship University event last fall in Goshen, Ind. Stewardship University workshops will be available at Nashville 2001.

More miracles are coming!



Peter and John were well-acquainted with the man sitting beside the gate called Beautiful (Acts 3:2). No doubt they had often given alms to him on their way to worship. But today was different. Their pockets were empty.

Unable to do their normal religious duty, they suddenly became aware of a new power within! Said Peter, “I have no silver and gold today, but I will give you what I do possess.” At the name of Jesus, the man walked for the first time in his life! His rejoicing could not be contained!

Lawrence Brenneman (left), a Constituency Leaders Council representative from Allegheny Conference, receives a prayer cloth—woven from strips of cloth with prayers from congregations for the St. Louis 99 Assembly—from Ron Byler, associate executive director designate of Mennonite Church USA. Each of the conferences and related groups received a similar prayer cloth at the CLC meeting in Kansas City in March.

The new walk of the lame man was not the only miracle. Peter and John, with their usual resources unavailable, realized they possessed something better – a power within themselves springing from faith in Jesus.

Transformation has given us a similar opportunity. Changes in the church have left us without the old resources, ideas and methods of doing and being the church. But any sense of loss can be quickly overtaken with the discovery of freshness, vitality and power “in Jesus’ name” that we had overlooked before! More miracles are coming!

I am encouraged by observing such discoveries all around as we are becoming a new church. Transformation is far more than a new arrangement of program agencies and offices. The forces of renewal and new miracles have been unleashed in ways our generation may not have witnessed before.

We are all a part of these new opportunities. May we grasp them as did Peter and John, “in the name of Jesus”!

James Schrag

Jim Schrag
Executive Director designate
Mennonite Church USA

Colossians 3:12-17 is prayer focus for Nashville 2001

In preparation for the Mennonite Church USA Assembly in Nashville, July 2-7, 2001, we invite all who will be attending and all who will be holding the gathering in their prayers to use the Colossians 3:12-17 text as a prayer focus.

Please pray for:

- all who will gather at Nashville, that they may know themselves holy and beloved by God.
- church leaders and delegates, that their efforts may be filled with the life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit.
- congregations, that they may catch new vision for how God can work among and through us.

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved,
clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,
meekness, and patience.
Bear with one another and,
if anyone has a complaint against another,
forgive each other;
just as the Lord has forgiven you,
so you also must forgive.
Above all, clothe yourselves with love,
which binds everything together
in perfect harmony.
And let the peace of Christ
rule in your hearts,
to which indeed you were called
in the one body. And be thankful.
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly;
teach and admonish one another
in all wisdom;
and with gratitude in your hearts
sing psalms, hymns,
and spiritual songs to God.
And whatever you do, in word or deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father
through him.
—Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV)

Mennonite
Church
USA

T.I.M.E. is on Alabama children's side

MCC community worker provides love and attention

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Sharron Carter doesn't need to coax neighborhood kids to come to the after-school program she runs at New Vision Ministries, her home congregation. As soon as they see her car in the church parking lot, she says, they pound on the church door and beg to come in, even if it's not the program's normal hours.

"But I'm glad for that," Carter says. "These kids have so many things they have to run from, it's good for them to have something they want to run to."

About 15 to 20 children come daily to Carter's free program, which she calls T.I.M.E. (Teach, Instruct, Motivate, Encourage). In addition to help with reading and math, participants get computer training, a snack, devotions and lots of love and attention from Carter and volunteers from the church.

"I've seen kids just be transformed," says Carter, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker. "They're shown a lot of love, but they know there are rules."

She describes the development of the program as her long journey of understanding God's calling. Three years ago, she was working in the corporate world and babysitting her kindergarten-age grandson and discovered he was behind in his school work.

Carter soon realized her grandson wasn't the only one who needed help, and she began to tutor regularly at the local elementary school. In August 1999, New Vision Ministries embraced her idea of having an after-school program at their building.

Four volunteers from the church now assist Carter on a rotating basis. Most of the children, who range in age from 7 to 14, come from single-parent homes.

"The boys in the program that don't have fathers in the homes, they respond so well to the young men who come in to help," she says. "I've seen [the children's] anger levels really go down. It's amazing."

Carter serves with MCC's Church Community Worker program, which allows people of color to serve in their home communities. MCC has eight such workers across the United States. Carter learned about the program through a visitor staying with her pastor, whose daughter she was tutoring.

Carter is encouraged by the support she receives from participants' parents, most of whom would not be able to afford other afterschool care. They help enforce her zero tolerance rule for fighting and cook dinner every Wednesday so the children can stay for an evening Bible study.

"Most of the parents are really young, and it's a blessing for them to have an older person helping train their children," Carter says.

Dionicio Acosta, service program administrator for MCC East Coast, has observed Carter in action. "What was inspiring during my visit with her is to see that she is more than just a tutor to the children; at times she is also serving as their mother," he says.

During the school's spring break, Carter ran an all-day program, which she also hopes to offer during the summer.

"This is just one of those calls," Carter says. "I tried to ignore it for so long, but I knew I was supposed to be working with children."
—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service

MCC photo by Ronald Burt

Sharron Carter stands with some of the children who attend T.I.M.E., the after-school program she runs in Birmingham, Ala. Carter is one of eight people across the United States serving with Mennonite Central Committee's Church Community Worker program, which allows people of color to work in their home communities.

Talk about away football games

The Bluffton (Ohio) College football team will find out if the game in Spain is played mainly the same. The Beavers left May 15 for Barcelona to play a Spanish college team on May 19.

But the 14-day trip isn't all about football. The team will work in a home for battered women and children. There will also be sight-seeing, and tour participants can take the trip for credit to fulfill Bluffton's cross-cultural requirements.

"The educational value of this trip is the main reason we are going," says Carlin Carpenter, Bluffton's head football coach. "The experience of this trip will be a highlight of their college years, without a doubt."

Katie Marshall

Mennonite Voluntary Service worker Karla Stoltzfus tends a garden in Topeka, Kan., where she serves with a nonprofit organization that promotes sustainable agriculture and rural life. Stoltzfus says her assignment has increased her awareness of environmental issues.

On land and sea, creation gets MVS care

Service workers seek to preserve earth's resources

With his interest in marine biology, Derek Wentorf lives and works along the northwest coast of the Pacific Ocean. Fifteen hundred miles east, Karla Stoltzfus has her feet on the ground of Kansas' fertile plains.

Wentorf and Stoltzfus are Mennonite Voluntary Service workers. He is a program assistant at Puget Soundkeepers Alliance (PSA), a grass-roots watchdog organization in Seattle. She works with the nonprofit Kansas Rural Center in Topeka.

Despite the differences in their assignments, Wentorf and Stoltzfus share a concern for the environment. The delicacy of the ecosystem has become more apparent to both of them, which provides added incentive to seek ways to preserve the resources they work with.

Stoltzfus coordinates the Topeka Common Ground Project, which establishes urban gardens and connects urban consumers with rural farmers. In any given week, Karla may visit one of the 10 community garden sites and, during gardening season, work with people to plant, maintain and harvest the gardens. She teaches composting, nutrition and gardening, and she often leads cooking or craft projects.

Stoltzfus' contact with farmers has increased her awareness of the rapid depletion of the earth's resources. Traditional farming methods such as the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides produce cheap food. But their effect on the land causes a more expensive and long-lasting effect, she says. Topsoil is lost, groundwater is contaminated, and cancer rates escalate.

"Not only does our highly mechanized, petroleum- and chemical-dependent food system hurt our environment, it contributes to the unraveling of the fabric of our communities," Stoltzfus says.

PSA works to ensure a healthy quality of water in Puget Sound. Wentorf's work includes researching and reviewing industry pollution. He also coordinates volunteers for various PSA programs and takes occasional kayak outings to collect water samples and observe effects of local industries on Puget Sound.

But there is much more to be done, something that discourages Wentorf. Small grass-roots organizations such as PSA often take on the brunt of cleanup efforts for messes that huge multimillion-dollar industries leave untouched. "It's hard to stay upbeat, truthfully," he says, "but you do what you can."

One reason so little is being done is that change is expensive, Wentorf says. It is hard enough for industries to meet federal or state regulations, let alone reduce their pollution to safe levels. Another reason is that money and creation are often pitted against each other.

"The economy always seems to override the environment," Wentorf says. "They should really go hand in hand."

Stoltzfus says a healthy economy depends on a healthy environment. "Communities can be strengthened, pollution can be reduced, land can be restored and satisfying jobs can be created through gardening and farming in ways that respect all creation—people and earth," she says.

When it comes to caring for the environment, Wentorf says, every little bit counts. "Recycling, composting, washing your car where it won't drain into clean water sources, being aware of where you shop and what kinds of products you buy, considering alternative transportation options," he says, "all of these create an attitude of environmental care and concern."—*Jill K. Landis for MBM News Service*

> The economy always seems to override the environment. They should really go hand in hand.
>
> —*Derek Wentorf*

Correction: Eric Good Kaufmann is the art teacher at Bethany Christian Schools in Goshen, Ind. His name was misspelled in the May 8 issue.

Singing is sacrament, new book says

HARRISONBURG, Va.—If singing were taken away from them, Mennonites would not know how to worship. Their faith would be barren, say the authors of a new book.

Singing: A Mennonite Voice by Kenneth J. Nafziger and Marlene Kropf is the first book to discuss hymn singing from the perspective of those people sitting in the pews. Released this month by Herald Press, the book is the culmination of a two-year listening and research project by Nafziger, music professor at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, and Kropf, associate professor of spiritual formation and worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

The authors were both involved in the eight-year project that led to the 1992 publication of *Hymnal: A Worship Book,* which is used in Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations throughout the United States and Canada. The new book grew out of the hymnal project.

Nafziger and Kropf interviewed more than 100 people of all ages, backgrounds and experiences, asking, "What happens when you sing?" The responses showed repeatedly that singing is the Mennonite sacrament.

"We heard that the physical pleasure of singing is prized, that images that speak to a person's life are useful handles and that singing is the most important activity in which people engage in worship," Nafziger and Kropf say in the book's preface. "We heard that matters of experience, association and the challenges of hymn singing are often most important to people who sing."

The authors say they heard answers that would "rarely please those for whom rational or theological or aesthetic arguments are necessary to support the inclusion or exclusion of a hymn" or for "those for whom literary excellence is a prime concern."

Most of the interviews were conducted in 1994 and 1995. Kropf incorporated some of the research into her doctoral project, "Singing as Sacrament: An Exploration of the Role of Hymn Singing in Mennonite Spiritual Formation." The interviews also became the basis for "Why Mennonites Sing," Nafziger and Kropf's keynote address at the 1997 conference of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada.—*Steve C. Shenk*

Ontario church joins homosexuality group

SCARBOROUGH, Ont.—Warden Woods Mennonite Church of Scarborough has declared itself supportive of noncelibate homosexuals in the church by joining the Supportive Congregations Network. Warden Woods becomes the 27th member of SCN, which is a program of the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns.

"We are not intending to sacrifice the righteousness part of church life for the sake of justice," says congregation member Dale Hildebrand. "We feel at peace that we have kept the two together. We believe in monogamous, committed relationships."

The decision comes a year after a congregational survey on the issue. Most of the 100-member congregation supported joining SCN, although some members would have opted to be less openly political.

The Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) board has sent a letter to all conference congregations, informing them of Warden Woods' action.

"I hope we can spend more energy reminding ourselves of what we can still do together, even when we disagree on substantive issues," says MCEC moderator Andrew Reesor-McDowell.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Ryan Miller

Debut performance

Even before the building is completed, Goshen (Ind.) College music faculty and students have taken to the stage of the school's new music building. More than 40 people recently inaugurated the performance hall stage with a concert of singing after workers finished raising the hall's steel frame. The $24-million building is expected to be completed by next spring.

What to give for 70th anniversary?

A 25th anniversary is silver, 50th is gold and 60th is diamond. But residents of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Homes prompt the seemingly unanswerable question of what to give for a 70th wedding anniversary.

Souderton Mennonite Homes, a retirement community of about 450 residents, has seven couples who have been married 70 years or more. Another two widows were married for at least 70 years before their husbands died. And one resident has been married for more than 70 years to her husband, who still lives at home.

That makes 17 residents who have passed the seven-decade mark for matrimony. The longest has been married for 72 years.

"This has given us a chance at Souderton Mennonite Homes to celebrate longevity in marriage," says chaplain Carl Smeltzer.

this date in Mennonite history

May 22, 1955—General Conference Mennonite Church mission worker W.C. Voth baptizes the first 10 Mennonites in Taiwan.

Two graduates receive Bethel alumni awards

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—The Bethel College alumni association honored two graduates of the North Newton school May 19. Paul Renich received the Outstanding Alumnus Award, while Jacob D. Goering was given the Distinguished Achievement Award.

Renich, a 1942 Bethel graduate, spent 21 years at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, teaching chemistry and serving terms as academic dean and president. He later taught science courses at Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan. Since retiring in 1984, he has volunteered in Bethel's chemistry lab and taught occasional courses. He and his wife, Roberta, live in Hesston.

Goering, a 1941 graduate, was a longtime worker in the mental health field. He served seven years at Brook Lane, the first Mennonite mental health facility, located near Hagerstown, Md. He then taught for 26 years at the University of Maryland at College Park before going into private practice. Goering and his wife, Beth, retired to North Newton in 1996.

AMBS appoints new registrar

ELKHART, Ind.—Nisha S. Springer has been named registrar for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, beginning June 4. She will succeed Ruth Ann Gardner, who has held the position since 1986.

From January 2000 to January 2001, Springer served as administrator for the Stewardship Education Center of Mennonite Mutual Aid, Goshen, Ind. She holds a master's degree in applied economics from Sri Krishna Devaraya University in Anantapur, India, and has studied theology and ethics at AMBS. She has also taught and worked as an economic consultant in India.

New Canadian MDS office gets coordinator

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Disaster Service's (MDS) new Canadian office now has a coordinator. Nathan Koslowsky will oversee the office, which opened May 14 in Winnipeg.

Koslowsky has more than two years experience with MDS, most recently in Burgaw, N.C., where he and his wife, Danielle, served as project directors. He has also been a youth minister with the Salvation Army.

The MDS board earlier this year approved the creation of the Winnipeg office in order to better serve Canadian volunteers. Forty-seven percent of MDS's long-term workers come from Canada. Koslowsky will assist short- and long-term volunteers with paperwork related to transportation, border crossings and applications to MDS programs.—*MDS News Service*

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Workers

Friesen, Matt, concluded a pastorate April 22 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan. He will begin as pastor of Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Krehbiel, Val, will conclude a pastorate June 30 at Faith Mennonite Church, Montezuma, Kan.

Leppard, Alan, has been named associate pastor at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Linsenmeyer, Dean, will begin in September as pastor at Glennon Heights Mennonite Church, Lakeland, Colo.

Neufeld, Bonnie, was ordained March 11 for ministry at Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill.

Troyer, John, was installed March 4 as pastor of Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak, Mich.

Births

Balentine, Tristin Andrew, March 23, to Shawn and Stacy (Fenner) Balentine, Elkhart, Ind.

Gencay, Marian Eleanor, April 23, to Jeff and Ruthie (Powers) Gencay, Knoxville, Tenn.

Gilman, Benjamin Aaron Nathaniel, April 21, to Heidi (Lambert) and William Gilman, Knoxville, Tenn.

Houshour, Travis Jordan Aaron, April 21, to Angela (Williams) and James Houshour, Salem, Ohio.

Lehman, Eliza Hevener, March 26, to Anne (Hevener) and Keith Lehman, Cincinnati.

Mark, Brian Scott, April 6, to Scott and Summer (Quimby) Mark, Elkhart, Ind.

Mast, Nathan Ray, April 10, to Lonita (Miller) and Norman Mast, Hartville, Ohio.

Mast, Reuben Alexander, April 23, to Andre and Gloria (Good) Mast, Harrisonburg, Va.

Miller, Reed Christopher, March 22, to Jeff and Kathy (Coulter) Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Nelke, Isabelle Rose, Feb. 13, to Chris and Cindy (Watkins) Nelke, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Neufeldt, Hannah Wren, April 18, to Donna and Shaun Neufeldt, Steinbach, Man.

Ott, Gunner Michael, April 28, to Michele (Epp) and Steve Ott, Papillion, Neb.

Rittenhouse, Madison Rachel, April 20, to Olivia (Sanchez) and Shawn Rittenhouse, Goshen, Ind.

Stoner, Ruth Renee, April 23, to Laura (Hubbard) and Tim Stoner, Kouts, Ind.

Thomas, Hunter Parks, April 6, to Chad and Jill (Kluttz) Thomas, Huntersville, N.C.

Wagler, Tyler James, April 29, to Anita (Murphy) and Brent Wagler, New Hamburg, Ont.

Wenger, Magdalena Ruth Ramer, March 25, to Jonathan and Tonya (Ramer) Wenger, Madison, Wis.

Young, Charizanne Olivia, April 8, to Rebecca (Hawkins) and Scott Young, Lisbon, Iowa.

Marriages

D'Ambrosio/Mast: Anthony D'Ambrosio, Phoenix, and Kyndal Mast, Glendale, Ariz., March 31 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Derstine/Landis: Trina Derstine, Telford, Pa., and Philip Landis, Harleysville, Pa., April 21 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Desch/Fredinburg: Eric Desch, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Margie Fredinburg, Colorado Springs, April 21 at Colorado Springs.

Fisher/Stoner: Linda Fisher, Lancaster, Pa., and John Stoner, Quarryville, Pa., April 21 at Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Guntz/Yoder: Janelle Guntz, Glendale, Ariz., and Kent Yoder, Glendale, May 5 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

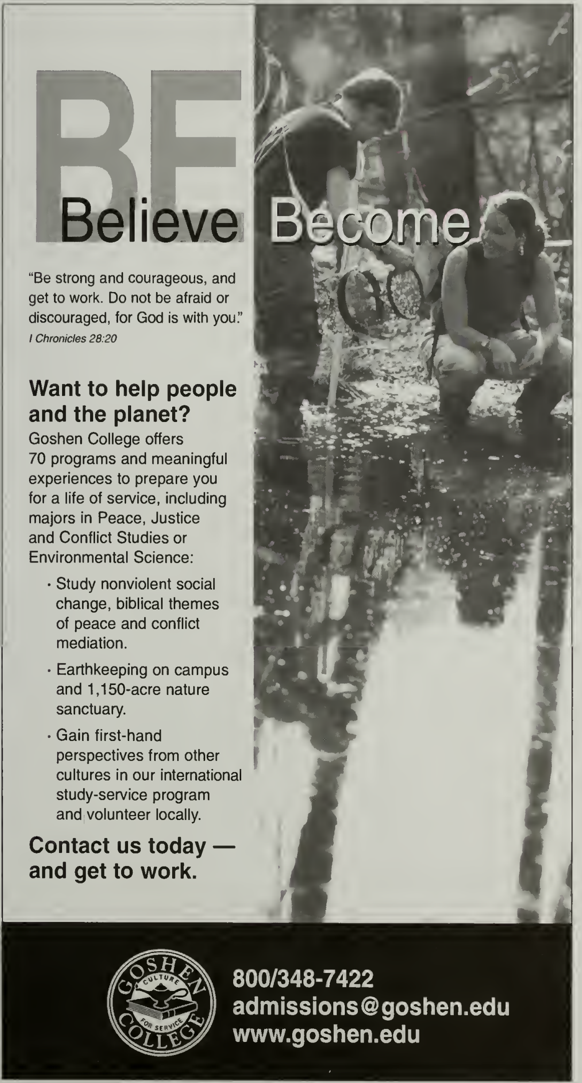
Montanez/Yoder: Trinidad Montanez, Phoenix, and Luella Yoder, Phoenix, April 7 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Osborne/Schwartzentruber: Tammy Osborne, Tavistock, Ont., and Darren Schwartzentruber, Kitchener, Ont., April 21 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Deaths

Bickel, Fred, 94, Ordway, Colo., died April 28. Spouse: Ella Yoder Bickel. Parents: John and Alice Bare Bickel (deceased). Funeral: May 2 at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Friesen, Raymond, 84, Henderson, Neb., died May 2. Spouse: Erma Wiens Friesen (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lena Kroeker Friesen (deceased). Survivors: children Edward, Allyn, Kenneth, Janet Turner; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 7 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.



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I Chronicles 28:20

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Gerber, Herman, 79, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died April 12. Parents: Lloyd and Florence Hochstetler Gerber (deceased). Funeral: April 14 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Gerber, Katie Lenhart, 94, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died April 15. Spouse: John Gerber (deceased). Parents: Oliver and Anna Miller Lenhart (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Robert, Marian Zuercher; 11 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: April 19 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Graber, Karen Swartz, 83, Stryker, Ohio, died April 25 of cancer. Spouse: Charles Graber. Parents: Clyde and Anne Flisher Swartz (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Ann Graber Hershberger; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 28 at Pine Grove Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Kramer, Erma Moyer, 77, Souderton, Pa., died April 11 of pulmonary fibrosis. Spouse: Roscoe Kramer. Other survivors: children Paul, Linda Devine; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 16 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pa.

Kroeker, Gerald, 43, Steinbach, Man., died April 29. Spouse: Marilyn Kroeker. Parents: Clarence and Agnes Kroeker. Other survivor: daughter Jenna. Funeral: May 3 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Loux, Esther Brunk, 83, Souderton, Pa., died April 22 of ovarian cancer. Spouse: Norman Loux. Parents: Henry Sr. and Nora Krause Brunk (deceased). Other survivors: children Elizabeth Kraybill, Philip, Peter; six grandchildren. Funeral: April 28 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, Mary Olive Christophel, 85, Elkhart Ind., died April 24. Spouse: Owen Martin (deceased). Parents: Wesley and Amanda Miller Christophel (deceased). Survivors: children Wendell, John, Millard; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 28 at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart.

Moshier, Luella, 87, Glenfield, N.Y., died April 20. Parents: Joseph and Sarah Moshier (deceased). Funeral: April 24 at Lowville (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Nunemaker, Lois, 85, Lansing, Mich., died March 18 of heart failure. Parents: Sam and Mable Nunemaker (deceased). Funeral: March 22 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Ashley, Mich.

Peterson, Susie Mae Clark, 96, Elkhart, Ind., died March 3. Spouse: Edward Peterson (deceased). Parents: Melvin and Emma Rose Clark (deceased). Survivors: children Russell, Charles; seven grandchildren; several great- and great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 7 at Osceola, Ind.

Schmeichel, Betty, 68, Freeman, S.D., died April 21. Spouse: Melvin Schmeichel. Parents: Charles (deceased) and Celia Fliginger. Other survivors: children Vernetta Waltner, Steven; five grandchildren. Memorial service: April 24 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Schwartzentruber, Isabel Ruby, 74, Tavistock, Ont., died April 22. Spouse: Harold Schwartzentruber (deceased). Parents: Clayton and Christina Ruby (deceased). Survivors: children Dale, Paul; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 25 at Tavistock Mennonite Church.

See, Polly Baro Coffey, 76, Stuarts Draft, Va., died April 18. Spouse: Hayes See (deceased). Parents: Ernest and Rosa Coffey (deceased). Survivor: daughter Carolyn. Funeral: April 21 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Short, Mary Green, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died April 22 of cancer. Spouse: Glen Short (deceased). Parents: John and Ella Green (deceased). Survivors: children Walter, Dale, Glen Jr., Joyce Jones, Cheryl Eicher; 14 grandchildren; five stepgrandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; one stepgreat-grandchild. Funeral: April 26 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Shrock, Mary Etta Mishler, 68, Topeka, Ind., died April 13 of cancer. Spouse: Mose Shrock. Parents: Stanley and Norma Mishler. Other survivors: children Lorene Schrock, LaMar, LaVon, Leon; two grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka.

Stauffer, Harry, 88, New Enterprise, Pa., died April 23. Parents: Milton and Mary Stauffer (deceased). Survivors: son Ronald; two grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Martinsburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Styer, Marie Detweiler, 77, Souderton, Pa., died April 29 of respiratory failure and meningitis. Spouse: Abraham Styer. Parents: Harvey and Anna Stover Detweiler (deceased). Other survivors: children Jack, Barry, Darlene Boyle, Donna; four grandchildren. Funeral: May 2 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Daniel, 77, West Liberty, Ohio, died April 16. Spouse: Mary Jeannette Yoder. Parents: Daniel and Maude Allgyer Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Gregory, Eric, David, Joan Macrae; eight grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Zook, Aaron, 92, Hannibal, Mo., died April 21. Spouse: Naomi Detwiler Zook (deceased). Parents: Lewis and Clara Stutzman Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Marlin, James, Samuel, Rozella Lehman, Phillip, Lester; foster daughter Joy Ward; 15 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 24 at Hannibal.

Zuercher, Lloyd, 86, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died April 24. Parents: Clarence and Ada Hershberger Zuercher (deceased). Funeral: April 27 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

- **Maplewood Mennonite Church** seeks 1/3-time ***music director***, with some worship planning responsibilities.

  Send resume by June 15 to Senior Pastor, Maplewood Mennonite Church, 4129 Maplecrest Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815.

- **Fairview Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***lead pastor***, rural area. Interested candidates respond to Pastoral Search Committee, attn. Reuel Detweiler, 1264 E. Helmer Lake Rd., Fairview, MI 48621; 989-848-2305; <rdetweiler@m33access.com>.

- **Belleville Mennonite School** has teacher openings beginning August 2001: ***high school English*** and ***middle school teacher***.

  Please contact Ray Baker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184; email <bmsoffice@lcworkshop.com>.

- **Canadian Mennonite University** is seeking a full-time ***director of athletics***. The director is expected to provide leadership in the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of CMU's student athletes and coaches. For more information, visit our website at <www.cmu.ca>.

  Please send applications, with references, to Erwin Warkentin, Canadian Mennonite University, 500 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2N2.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.

  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in the ***resource room, 1st grade***, and an anticipated opening in ***middle school history/computer***.

  Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Ready for new opportunities** to serve others? This summer, Mennonite Central Committee needs a service program coordinator to serve in ***Florida***. MCC also needs country representatives to serve for a year, preferably longer, in ***Congo, Ethiopia, Tanzania*** and ***Zambia***. Country representatives need to have worked and lived in a culture other than their own for at least a year.

  Please contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>, or the MCC office nearest you to apply for any of these five leadership positions open this summer.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has openings for ***singles*** beginning Sept. 1 and Dec. 1 for a one-year voluntary service assignment.

  For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center** seeks full-time ***executive director/development director*** for year-round retreat center/campground in southeast Virginia. Responsibilities include overall administration with major focus on development activities and church relations.

  Send resume or inquiries no later than June 30, 2001, to Sanford Snider, 7140 Turner Road, Richmond, VA 23231; email <snidergs@juno.com>.

- **Mennonite Conciliation Services** and Eastern College are sponsoring a ***summer mediation and facilitation training institute***, July 16-20, 2001, at Eastern College's campus in St. Davids, Pa. The cost is $450 ($500 for registrations received after June 15); some scholarship assistance is available.

  For more information, visit <www.mcc.org/mcs.html> or contact MCS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-3889; <mcs@mccus.org>.

- **Mount Pleasant Christian School**, a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.

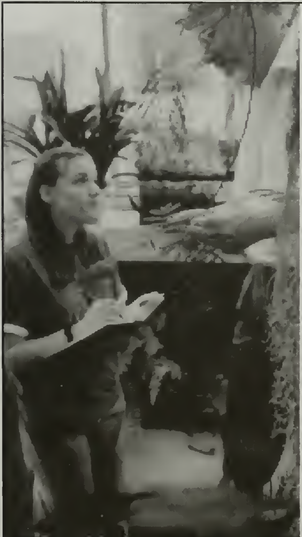
  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **Huber Mennonite Church**, New Carlisle, Ohio, seeks services of a ***pastor*** committed to serving faithfully according to God's Word. Small congregation of 75 in recently expanded facility with anticipation of growth through outreach.

  Contact Judy Hartman, 937-667-0287.

- **Offender/Victim Ministries** of Newton, Kan., seeks ***program director***, half-time in Match-2 (M-2), quarter-time in Arts-in-Prison (APP); maturity to work with inmates in the Hutchinson Correctional Facility, skills to recruit and retain volunteers and match them with inmates, and ability to work with prison personnel. This salaried position opens June 1, 2001, and requires prison clearance.

  Send resume to Marlene Beeson, Executive Director, 900 N. Poplar, Suite 200, Newton, KS 67114; 316-283-2038; fax 316-283-2039; email <ovm@southwind.net>.



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classifieds

- **Mennonite artists** are invited to ***exhibit their work*** during the Mennonite convention in Nashville, July 2-7, 2001. Includes paintings, prints, sculpture, creative photography, collage and pottery. No crafts, kits or copies. Quilts only of the artist's original design.

  Contact Esther Augsburger, 1549 Hillcrest Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or <myronsa@aol.com>.

- **VORP of Boulder County, Colo.,** seeks an MVSer to fill position of ***program coordinator*** with Victim Offender Reconciliation Program as full-time staff member. This person will administer daily workings of the program. Position available immediately. Mediation/conciliation training helpful. Enjoy sunny weather, access to Rocky Mountains, great community/outdoor activities!

  Contact <bouldervorp@earthlink.net> or call 303-442-6040.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology, chemistry, mathematics/science, Bible/social studies***.

  Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***human resources associate director*** for short-term missions to initiate and coordinate short-term missions recruitment and personnel placement and to oversee pastoral care of participants. Discipleship Ministries short-term mission experience preferred.

  Contact Sherill Hostetter at 717-898-2251 or <sherillh@emm.org>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is in need of a ***social studies teacher***. Multicultural, urban experience desired.

  Please apply to Ms. Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***administrative/development associate*** to administer office procedures as well as administer and implement, under the Development Director, development activities.

  Please apply to Polly Ann Brown, Personnel Committee, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Greencroft** has a full-time management position for an ***assistant food service director***. This person will assist food service director in the management of a 100+ employee department. Priority given to registered dietitian or certified dietary manager. Position available beginning July 1 or later.

  Discover the rewards at Greencroft. Apply or send resume to Human Resources, Greencroft, P.O. Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527; 219-537-4000. EOE. Greencroft is sponsored by Mennonite Health Services.

- **Are you, or someone you know, a manager**, administrator or leader with two or more years of experiencing living and working overseas? If so, Mennonite Central Committee invites you or your colleague to apply for one of the numerous MCC leadership openings. This year MCC needs leaders for ***El Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, south Florida, Colombia, Vietnam, Laos and Egypt***. Leadership openings in 2002 include, among others, ***Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Philippines and Bolivia***.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.

  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English. One year, full-time.

  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.

  Other positions available: ***keyboarding and intro computer instructor, assistant boys' resident director, kitchen assistant, coaches*** (head girls' soccer, JV boys' soccer).

  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

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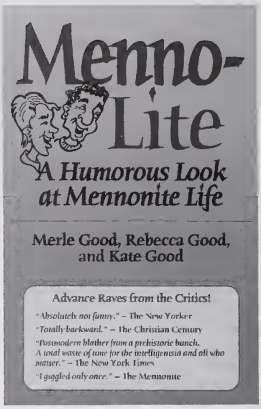

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by Rich Preheim

From age to age

"Let no one despise your youth," the apostle Paul wrote Timothy, "but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity." There are a lot of congregations looking for young people to take the pulpit and set that example, according to two studies.

A number of U.S. denominations are experiencing a graying clergy with a lack of young people coming into the vocation, reports *Congregations*. For example, in 1975, 24 percent of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) clergy were younger than 35, while 19 percent were older than 55. By 1999, however, 30 percent were over 55 and 7 percent were under 35.

It's a trend acutely felt elsewhere. Between 1974 and 2000, the percentage of Episcopal priests under 35 plummeted from 19 percent to less than 4 percent. During the same time, the percentage of priests over 55 grew from 22 percent to 40 percent. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod saw its number of ministers under 35 drop from 18 percent in 1981 to 8 percent last year, while ministers over 55 went from 23 percent to 31 percent.

Congregations proposes several theories, including low pay and the vocation's loss of prestige. "People aren't encouraging their children to go into ministry, particularly people who are clergy themselves," says John O'Hara, research assistant for the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

At the same time, those who are entering the clergy are older. A survey of seminary students found the average age to be 35, with nearly 60 percent of students older than 30, according to *The Christian Century.* The study showed the mean age of students entering Catholic seminary was nearly 40, while for students entering rabbinical school it was 30.

Capping the violence

Oil production in Sudan is helping fuel that country's decades-old civil war, says a Canadian church group. The Canadian Ecumenical Mission to Sudan is calling for an international moratorium on oil development in Sudan "until a just peace is negotiated."

ChristianWeek says that some of the oil revenues go to Sudan's Muslim government and help fund the war against opponents in the largely Christian southern region of the country. Oil companies are also accused of ignoring abuses by the government.

"Develop the oil in Sudan," says Janet Somerville, general secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches, "but not until there is a peace treaty and a political structure that north and south can live with."

In addition to the Canadian Council of Churches, the Canadian Ecumenical Mission to Sudan includes the Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches, Inter-Church Coalition on Africa and Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. The group last month sent a delegation to southern Sudan.

There has been war in Sudan since the 1950s. Various human rights organizations have reported systematic bombings, use of children as soldiers, attacks on civilian targets, starvation and terrorism. More than 2 million people have been killed and more than 4 million displaced in the current fighting, which began in 1943.

Birth pangs

In percentages nearly identical to their non-Catholic counterparts, Catholic women say they want access to reproductive health services—including birth control and abortion—despite the Vatican's prohibitions.

Conscience published the survey results, which show that 90 percent of Catholic women want their community hospital, regardless of church affiliation, to provide birth control pills. Ninety-one percent of all women want such access to birth-control pills. Fifty-seven percent of both groups want their hospital to offer morning-after pills to prevent pregnancy, while 76 percent of Catholics and 78 percent overall want access to morning-after pills for rape victims.

Forty-eight percent of Catholic women and 50 percent of all women approve of legalized abortion, while 86 percent of Catholic women and 87 percent of all women support the availability of abortions when the woman's life is in danger.

Go fish

As if there was any doubt that Christians are a diverse lot, *The Marketplace* underscores the point by noting various niche groups—groups of Christians organized around a particular interest. Some are based on occupation, such as the Christian Medical Society, Transport for Christ, Christian Chefs, Cops for Christ, even the Christian Wrestling Federation. Then there are those niche groups created around hobbies, such as the 76,000-member Christian Motorcycle Association and the 7,000-member Fellowship of Christian Anglers Society.

Tidbits

- American Friends Service Committee recently hosted a 10-year reunion of Gulf War conscientious objectors, attended by 16 people.—*Reporter for Conscience' Sake*
- The International Bible Society and the Fellowship of Christian Cowboys have produced *The Way for Cowboys,* a pocket-sized New Testament including personal cowboy testimonies. —*The Observer*
- The Bible is available in complete or partial form in 2,261 languages. —*Calvary Messenger*
- A Mississippi law goes into effect July 1 requiring every public school classroom, auditorium and cafeteria to display the United States motto, "In God We Trust."—*AFA Journal*

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Rich Preheim

Death takes a holiday

For those who believe violence is unacceptable because it is contrary to the will of God, commemorating the deaths of soldiers and sailors might seem as incongruous as worshiping some pagan goddess of spring at Easter. Yet that is what Easter was for before it was appropriated by Christians to celebrate Christ's resurrection. Similarly, some scholars believe that the day we use to extol the Savior's birth might have been a Roman holiday.

So if believers can transform those decidedly non-Christian celebrations into our faith's holiest days, we can turn Memorial Day into an observance consistent with Mennonite beliefs of peace and discipleship—and maybe provide a message of hope to a world that desperately needs it.

Memorial Day is a difficult time for pacifists as its origins and popular observances are about war and those who fought and died in them. Remembering any lost human life is appropriate. But the problem for pacifists isn't just remembering the dead. "By singling out the cause of war, Memorial Day may well serve to sanctify that cause," noted the late peace activist and journalist Sam Day.

As Christians and as Mennonites, we have our own fallen faithful to honor—and in doing so we can offer a witness against the bloodshed and hatred that pervade our world.

So rather than engage in ceremonies that uncomfortably lift up our country and military, many of us use the day to simply honor departed family and friends. But we can do more. As Christians and as Mennonites, we have our own fallen faithful to honor—and in doing so we can offer a witness against the bloodshed and hatred that pervade our world. So as has been done with Christmas and Easter, let us appropriate Memorial Day for those men and women who inspire us to faithfulness and have glorified God because they gave up their earthly existences in allegiance to a kingdom higher than all other powers and principalities.

Our remembrances would span the whole of Christian history, from Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and Felix Manz, the first Anabaptist martyr through José Chuquín. He was president of the Mennonite Churches of Colombia and assassinated in 1991 by the Shining Path guerrilla group in Peru, where he was working with World Vision.

There are the well-known mysteries of Clayton Kratz and Danny Gerber, who disappeared while on Mennonite Central Committee assignments. Kratz was one of the first three MCC workers, heeding the call to offer aid in strife-torn Ukraine in 1920. Less than two months after his arrival, Kratz was apprehended by Communist forces and never heard from again. Gerber, serving in Vietnam, vanished in 1962 after being arrested by Viet Cong soldiers.

That same year, Merlin Grove, an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Somalia, was registering students for an English class when a Somali—reportedly a Muslim religious leader—stabbed the Ontario native to death and injured his wife.

While Grove was killed for apparently overt religious reasons, most lives have been lost due to accident and illness. In 1882, Samuel and Susie Haury, the first missionaries sent out by North American Mennonites, lost their infant son Karl in a building fire in Oklahoma, where they were serving among the Arapaho. India, the first overseas mission field for both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, has claimed about a dozen GC and MC workers. That number does not include Annie Funk, an early GC missionary to India who went down with the Titanic in 1912.

And the parade of white-robed martyrs continues: The victims of oppression in Russia, Ethiopia and elsewhere. Albert Keuter and A. du Croix, Dutch Mennonite ministers who died in Nazi concentration camps because of their opposition to Hitler. Paraguayan Mennonite Kornelius Isaak, who was stabbed to death in 1958 while trying to witness to natives in the Chaco. The thousands of Christians memorialized in the *Martyrs Mirror.*

In honoring these and countless other stalwarts of the faith—and the God for whom they died—we can turn a holiday of violence and death into one of discipleship and eternal life. There is no better reason to celebrate.—*rp*

No issue next week. The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated June 5.

the Mennonite

June 5, 2001

hope for harmony

worship and work for a new church

Nashville 2001
Colossians 3:12-17

Special preconvention issue

4 Unfinished business …

5 … but not business as usual

16 God's timing

24 More than harmony in Music City

About this issue

Momentum is building in congregations and among Mennonite Church USA leaders who are anticipating the early July convention in Nashville, Tenn. As we prepared this issue of *The Mennonite*, it was our intention to convey the import of the event, especially since most of our readers will not be in Nashville for this biennial gathering.

When nearly 10,000 Mennonites gather at the Opryland Hotel July 2-7, there will be many undercurrents at work. First, we note that the majority of those present will be participating in the youth convention. The long and expensive journey to Nashville for youth groups has touched most of our readers through countless fund-raising efforts (see pages 10 and 11). Hundreds of thousands of dollars are generated each biennium so that 6,000 youth and sponsors can participate in this convention that calls each person to make a commitment, or recommitment, to Christ.

This gathering has the potential to bring a dream to fruition that was first embraced by delegates 24 years ago.

Another 2,000 adults at Nashville will serve as delegates and may experience a watershed moment on Thursday, July 5. That is the day that delegates from General Conference Mennonite Church congregations and delegates from Mennonite Church conferences could vote on whether to form the new Mennonite Church USA.

For the past five months, *The Mennonite* has carried articles about new denominational structures to clarify the meaning of decisions that will be made in Nashville. The moderators of Mennonite Church USA have answered questions from our readers once each month since January. We editorialized about the importance of churchwide agencies that are being re-formed for mission, publishing and stewardship (higher education will be featured in next week's issue).

Now we offer this preconvention issue as a way to focus, for one week, on this gathering that has the potential to bring a dream to fruition that was first embraced by delegates 24 years ago. It is, as our headline on page 8 declares, a monumental convention.

While watching the process unfold over the past decade, we learned to use new words at different points along the way. The language of "merger" changed into "integration." Now the leaders speak of "transformation."

The transformation that may happen to delegates at Nashville centers around the way they experience God's Spirit in the discernment process. Hoping to blur the line between worship and work, while remaining faithful to parliamentary procedure, leaders of the delegate sessions want to transform the way this new church goes about its business (see page 5). If they are successful, then the new church will begin with a discernment process that is not "business as usual."

As you read these stories, we hope you will sense God's Spirit in the planning for the Nashville convention. We also hope you will be drawn to pray for those who serve as leaders of the church during this time.—*The editors*

Attention pastors!

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Cover photo by Laurie L. Oswald

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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Unfinished business ...

Delegates parade to the microphone to discuss membership during the 1999 joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in St. Louis. The convention produced no resolution to the issue, and it will again address it at this year's convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Dale D. Gehman

Nashville may finally produce a new church and a conclusion to the merger process.

by Rich Preheim

When General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) delegates last met together, they left the future of a new denomination mired in disagreements over membership and homosexuality but agreed to revisit those issues two years later.

It is now two years later.

MC and GC delegates from the United States will gather in Nashville, Tenn., July 2-7 to see if they can complete what was started in 1977 and left unfinished at St. Louis in 1999: the creation of Mennonite Church USA. If the delegates are able to do so, the new denomination will begin Feb. 1, 2002, succeeding the General Conference Mennonite Church, created in 1860, and the Mennonite Church, born in 1898.

If both proposals are adopted, delegates will spend much of the remaining day and a half of the convention discussing the future of the church they just agreed to create.

But to do that, the delegates will need to pass the two key measures needed to officially implement Mennonite Church USA: a plan of merger and membership guidelines. The plan of merger addresses legal aspects, such as merging the two current denominations into one and approving incorporation and bylaws for the new church. The membership guidelines describe the basis for membership in the new denomination and how membership is secured, including the requirement that denominational membership is held through area conference membership. These sections are also part of the proposed bylaws.

Not in the bylaws is the membership guidelines' controversial section stipulating that ministers shall not perform same-sex covenant ceremonies and providing procedures for dealing with dual-conference congregations that have been disciplined by one area conference but not the other. If the membership guidelines are approved, the homosexuality section will be in effect until a general review of all denominational structures in 2007.

If the membership guidelines and plan of merger are not approved at Nashville, the next biennium will be like the last. The Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church will remain legally separate but with one executive director and one board. The two denominations will also be served by an increasing number of merged programs. For example, GC and MC publishing operations have already united, and new mission and education agencies are scheduled to follow.

Delegates will deal with merger issues starting Tuesday, July 3, the first day of business. MC and GC delegate assemblies will meet separately for discussions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with the other body observing. The next morning, the two groups will meet together around tables, with GC and MC delegates assigned to each table, to continue discussions in hopes of deciding by noon whether they want to continue moving toward a vote on the membership guidelines and plan of merger.

continued on page 6

... but not business as usual

New approaches to delegate sessions 'implement what we sing.'

by Gordon Houser

When delegates of the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) gather July 2-7 in Nashville, Tenn., they will again address issues facing the church. But they won't do it the way they have in the past.

At this assembly, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board wants to use a process called Worshipful Work. According to moderator Lee Snyder, this is a way to "implement what we sing." She hopes this process will enable delegates to build on the work that has happened in the past several months.

Some of that work happened at the Constituency Leaders Council last fall. The CLC, which meets twice each year, consists of leaders from the 23 U.S. area conferences and eight other constituent groups, such as the African-American Mennonite Association, Mennonite Indian Leaders Council and Mennonite Women. At that meeting, participants met in table groups, where they spoke "with each other rather than only to each other," says Jim Schrag, executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

Jim says CLC decided to try this different approach to doing business to help people listen to each other. "The emphasis on the Spirit was helpful," he says, and helped participants find new levels of commonality and respect for each other.

Moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, who chairs CLC, also says that this new way of meeting "worked very well." Having people pay attention to the spirit of the meeting helped greatly, he says.

Because Worshipful Work was such a good experience at CLC, the Executive Board decided it was worth trying at Nashville. Both Jim and Lee say this process does not replace other ways of doing business, such as parliamentary procedure, but supplements them.

It is a way to bring into the business sessions the prayerful work that has been done in order to do proper discernment about matters of readiness and implementation, says Lee.

How exactly this happens is difficult to pin down. "It's more a presence than an outline to be followed," says Jim. Lee adds that it requires an attitude of openness rather than a set of rules.

While the Executive Board has not finalized plans for just what will happen at the business sessions in Nashville, the tentative plans are these:

- On Tuesday, July 3, delegates will be in theater seating, as in the past.
- One delegate body (GC or MC) will meet while the other listens; then they will switch.
- Later that day, delegates will caucus in groups.
- On Wednesday, July 4, tables will be set up, with 10 people at each table.
- People at each table will consist of a balanced mixture of GC and MC members.
- These table groups will remain intact throughout the rest of the week.

An important part of the delegate sessions at Nashville will be the role of the listening committee, which consists of members of the Council on Faith, Life and Strategy (see box at right). Instead of only reporting at the end of the sessions, this committee will report at the beginning of each day of business.

This will be a helpful change, says Ervin, who will not serve on the listening committee at Nashville because he will be helping Lee moderate the sessions in his role as moderator-elect. (Vice chair Ruth Naylor will lead the committee at Nashville.) Reporting in the morning will give the committee time to reflect on the previous day's session, then communicate with the moderators before the next day's session.

Serving as facilitators in this process will be

continued on page 7

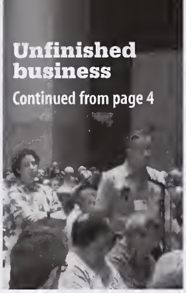
Council on Faith, Life and Strategy

Ervin Stutzman, chair
Ruth Naylor, vice chair
James Brenneman
Norma J. Johnson
James M. Lapp
Martha Yoder Maust
José Ortiz

New levels of commonality: A table group at a Constituency Leaders Council meeting

Kevin Goertzen

Laurie L. Oswald



Unfinished business

Continued from page 4

If the delegates decide to proceed, Thursday morning, July 5, will be devoted to more discussion and then action on the membership guidelines. Pending passage of the guidelines, the delegates in the afternoon will discuss and act on the plan of merger. No amendments will be allowed to either proposal, and two-thirds majorities will be required from both MC and GC delegates for passage.

If both proposals are adopted, delegates will spend much of the remaining day and a half of the convention discussing the future of the church they just agreed to create. The only other action on the agenda is a call for special elections to affirm the new moderator-elect and nominees for the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, the Leadership Discernment (nominating) Committee and the boards of Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Publishing House Inc. and the yet-unnamed mission and education agencies. (See list of nominees below.)

Delegate approval of Mennonite Church USA will automatically make all current GC members part of the new denomination, while MC members will have to take separate actions to join. The plan is to have all congregations vote on the merger. That will happen in the GC delegate assembly, which is composed of congregational delegates. But the MC delegate assembly is made up of delegates from the area conferences. So the congregational delegates to the MC area conferences will have to take another vote on Mennonite Church USA by Feb. 1, 2002. Six conferences have already voted to join the new denomination: Franconia, Gulf States, Ohio, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest and Rocky Mountain. They account for 54 of the MC assembly's 253 delegates. Puerto Rico has decided not to join Mennonite Church USA.

Two GC conferences, Central District and Eastern District, have taken symbolic votes in support of the new denomination.

MC area conferences will also have the option of provisional membership, allowing them until Jan. 31, 2007, to decide to become full members or to not join Mennonite Church USA. Area conferences can vote to become provisional members or take no action and become provisional members by default. There will be no provisional membership after Jan. 31, 2007.

The provisional membership option was prompted by some conferences' reluctance to be part of the new church because of concerns over membership and homosexuality, issues that have plagued the merger process during the past decade and contributed to some congregations' decisions to withdraw.

The Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church have cooperated for decades in a variety of ministries, including Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service, Civilian Public Service and seminary education. In 1977, the two denominations agreed to explore the possibility of a joint convention, which was held in Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983. At that convention, GC and MC delegates recommended pursuing further cooperation.

In 1989, both delegate bodies, meeting jointly in Normal, Ill., ratified a recommendation to explore merging the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Six years later, in Wichita, Kan., MC and GC delegates gave approval to the merger, with hopes of completing it at their next joint convention, in St. Louis in 1999. While delegates to that gathering didn't form Mennonite Church USA, they did approve the creation of Mennonite Church Canada.

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite.

Nashville votes: Numbers by colors

General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates at next month's convention in Nashville, Tenn., will meet jointly and vote simultaneously on proposals to merge their two denominations. Since each group has to pass each measure by a two-thirds vote, it is necessary to distinguish between GC and MC actions.

That will be accomplished by each delegate assembly using ballots of different color paper.

The GC assembly could have more than 11,000 votes, both delegates and proxies, while the MC assembly has a maximum of 253 delegates and no proxies.

—Rich Preheim

Nominees for Nashville delegate ballot

Executive Board

Affirm for a four-year term:

- **B. Elaine Bryant,** Chicago
- **Edith J. Landis,** Telford, Pa.
- **Harold Miller,** Corning, N.Y.
- **Sue E. Miller,** Middlebury, Ind.
- **D. Duane Oswald,** moderator-elect, Fresno, Calif.
- **Nancy Rodriguez-Lora,** Brooklyn, N.Y.
- **Sharon Waltner,** Parker, S.D.
- **Heidi Regier Kreider,** North Newton, Kan.
- **Alice Ruth Ramseyer,** Bluffton, Ohio

Affirm for a two-year term:

- **Chuwang Pam,** Inglewood, Calif.
- **Tonya Ramer Wenger,** Madison, Wis.
- **Leonard Wiebe,** North Newton, Kan.
- **LaVern Yutzy,** Lititz, Pa.

Mission agency

Affirm for a four-year term:

- **Tesfatsion Dalellew,** Lancaster, Pa.
- **Roma Eicher,** Albany, Ore.

Mennonite Mutual Aid

Affirm for a four-year term:

- **Carol Duerksen,** Hillsboro, Kan.

Leadership Discernment Committee

Affirm for a four-year term:

- **Ivorie Lowe,** Markham, Ill.
- **Bill Zuercher,** Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Education agency

Affirm for a four-year term:

- **Terri Brenneman,** Pasadena, Calif.
- **Jesus Cruz,** Lancaster, Pa.
- **Ed Diller,** Cincinnati

Affirm for a two-year term:

- **Susan S. Huxman,** Wichita, Kan.
- **Paul A. Johnson,** Denver
- **Franzie Loepp,** Normal Ill.

Mennonite Publishing House

Affirm for a four-year term:

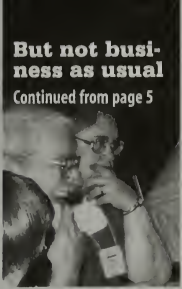
- **Carlos Romero,** Goshen, Ind.
- **Eileen Roth,** Iowa City, Iowa

Affirm for a two-year term:

- **J. Glen Hostetler,** Mount Joy, Pa.
- **Jeff Wright,** Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.
- **Patricia Young,** Macomb, Ill.

But not business as usual

Continued from page 5



We need to be mindful about giving attention to the Spirit.

—Brenda Glanzer Lilliston

Laurie L. Oswald

A way to be more intentional: Brenda Glanzer Lilliston (left) and Jonathan Smith will serve as facilitators.

Brenda Glanzer Lilliston, an ordained GC minister and a spiritual growth consultant from Wichita, Kan., and Jonathan Smith, associate pastor at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church. Brenda and Jonathan served as facilitators at last fall's CLC meeting, and earlier had done the same at area conference gatherings. Both received training in Worshipful Work about a year ago.

Jonathan sees his role as a consultant. He and Brenda will bring concerns from the listening committee to the moderators as they all try to sense when the group may be drifting from a worshipful awareness of God's presence. They may call the group to pause and pray or sing. Or they may bring a caution about the direction the discussion is headed.

Jonathan sees Worshipful Work as a way to be more intentional, for people to be more aware of the need to listen. Other models lean in this direction, he says. The question to keep in mind is, What does it mean to let God decide and then follow that?

Brenda echoes this concern. "We need to be mindful about giving attention to the Spirit," she says. The role of facilitators is to help keep that awareness alive.

To prepare for these kinds of meetings, she does what she hopes all delegates will do: spend time in prayer, look over the agenda and be willing to let go of expectations of what should happen. Worshipful Work requires openness to whatever direction the Spirit leads, she says.

At Nashville the worship times and the delegate sessions will be in the same room. This is key, say the planners, because it reinforces the idea of bringing together worship and work.

Lee says delegates should not feel a disconnection between worship and business. Having both in the same location "sanctifies that space," says Ervin.

In doing business, Mennonites have adopted helpful methods from the secular world, such as Robert's Rules of Order. But these only take us so far, says Ervin.

The planners for the delegate sessions at Nashville want to be "attuned to God in our midst," says Lee. Worshipful Work provides a way to do that, to let our faith speak to all that we do.

"In the same way we want the new church to be missional," says Ervin, "we also want our delegates to be worshipful in their business."

Gordon Houser is associate editor for features for The Mennonite.

In the same way we want the new church to be missional, we also want our delegates to be worshipful in their business.

—Ervin Stutzman

Emphasis on the Spirit: Barbara Nelson (left), representing Mennonite Women, and Ralph Lehman of Franklin Conference at a Constituency Leaders Council meeting

Laurie L. Oswald

Monumental convention in a monumental place

Delegate action on Mennonite Church USA not the only big deal at Nashville convention.

by Rich Preheim

Nashville 2001 will be the largest gathering of U.S. Mennonites ever under roof. It certainly will be the largest roof.

The Opryland Hotel—all nine acres of it—in Nashville, Tenn., will host what could be the last General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) convention. As of May 29, 8,824 people have registered for the July 2-7 event. The St. Louis convention two years ago drew 9,698 people from both the United States and Canada. On the delegates' agenda this year is action to merge the two denominations to form Mennonite Church USA.

Nashville 2001 is expected to be a monumental convention in a monumental place.

Billed as the largest combined hotel and convention center under one roof anywhere, the Opryland has waterfalls, tropical gardens and a quarter-mile-long river, in addition to 2,884 guest rooms and 600,000 square feet of convention space.

Within the facility's confines will be most children's, youth and adult convention activities. The junior high convention will be held on the campus of Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn., 25 miles east of Nashville.

Children's convention: The children's convention, for infants through sixth-grade students, will center on "developing an understanding of what it means to be God's chosen ones," says program coordinator Carol Grieser of Goshen, Ind., who recently retired after 30 years of teaching. Each morning will have worship through singing, Bible lessons and stories.

Opryland Hotel: convention under glass

The Delta (left) is one of three massive indoor gardens at the Opryland Hotel, site of next month's joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in Nashville, Tenn. The four-and-a-half-acre Delta features a quarter-mile-long river, big enough for passenger-carrying flatboats, and shops, meeting rooms and eating establishments, all in multistory structures under a glass roof that peaks at 150 feet.

The other indoor gardens are the Garden Conservatory, with 10,000 tropical plants, and the Cascades, with three waterfalls, ranging from 23 to 35 feet high, filling a 12,500 square-foot lake.

The Opryland, which covers nine acres next to the Grand Ole Opry, also has:

- 600,000 square feet of meeting, convention and exhibit space, including 85 meeting rooms, five ballrooms and a 288,000 square-foot exhibit hall
- 2,884 guest rooms, including 200 suites
- 80 percent annual occupancy rate
- 30 specialty shops
- 14 restaurants and lounges plus a food court
- 3 outdoor swimming pools.

Children will also memorize a daily Bible verse.

Afternoon activities will include games, drama, storytelling and a field trip to Cheekwood Botanical Gardens in Nashville. Children will also make quilts that will be given to a local children's organization and roll bandages and assemble school kits for Mennonite Central Committee.

The children's convention theme is "Together, Hand in Hand With Jesus." Registration stands at 210.

Junior high convention: About 247 junior high students and their sponsors have registered for the junior high convention, with about 400 expected. The convention theme is "Gettin' Together in Christ."

Activities will include worship led by Corey Miller, pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.; a performance of *Godspell* by Goessel (Kan.) High School students; humor from Ted & Lee, a comedy duo from Harrisonburg, Va.; a lock-in; and a visit to a local water park.

Youth convention: A total of 5,935 youth, sponsors and volunteers have so far registered for the youth convention. (See page 10.)

Young adult activities: Among the events planned specifically for young adults are two worship services and informal luncheon meetings. Scheduled late-night activities include coffeehouses, plays and visits to downtown Nashville.

Adult convention: In addition to the delegate sessions (see page 4) and times of worship (see page 12), the 2,432 registered adult convention participants will have a number of seminars they can attend. Topics include evangelism and church growth, racism, gender issues, rural communities, the Internet, health, mass media, peacemaking and history.

Like previous conventions, local service opportunities will be offered.

The convention will also feature stage presentations by Ted & Lee and of *Torba*, about a Mennonite Central Committee worker's work with refugees in the former Yugoslavia. Other activities will include concerts and Bible studies.

Peace family day: The afternoon and evening of Wednesday, July 4, will be devoted to observing Independence Day with alternatives to traditional observances. Regular convention business will be suspended for intergenerational activities at the Opryland, a local high school and a park. Among the scheduled events are worship services, displays, rock climbing, sand volleyball, music concerts and basketball, volleyball, soccer and Frisbee golf tournaments.

Christian Peacemaker Teams is planning two witnesses. In the morning will be an anti-death penalty march and prayer service, beginning at the state capitol and concluding at a maximum-security prison. In the afternoon, volunteers will visit a local toy store to assess its violent toys.

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite. *GCMC News Service contributed to this article.*

Registration figures

As of May 29

• Children's convention:	210
• Jr. high convention:	247
• Youth convention:	5,935
• Adult convention:	2,432
TOTAL	**8,824**

Courtesy photo

The Opryland Hotel's Delta Ballroom will be the site of the Nashville 2001 youth convention. At 55,314 square feet, Delta is the largest of Opryland's five ballrooms.

A musical journey

For Kansas church group, road to youth convention goes through recording studio.

by Melanie Zuercher

To get to Music City USA, the Inman (Kan.) Mennonite Church youth group decided to make music.

Attending the biennial denominational youth convention usually requires fund-raisers, from selling food to shaving facial hair. To help pay their way to this year's convention in Nashville, Tenn., the members of the Inman youth group took an unusual approach: they recorded a compact disc of original folk music, appropriately titled *Road to Nashville.*

The youth group—five males—had considered the most common ways to raise money. "The sheer amount of cars we would have to wash and cookies we would have to bake was mind-boggling" says youth pastor Jason Fox.

> **I have to comment on how impressed I have been by the churches we visited and what it has taught the guys about [denominational transformation]. We crossed [GC and MC] lines, but everyone responded well to us.**—*Jason Fox*

Recalls pastor Jerry Kaiser: "Then someone said, 'Let's do a CD.' I'm saying to myself, 'Oh, no! Where will we get the money to record the music, produce the CD, pay for permission to use the songs?' "

Nevertheless, the idea took off. Matt Kaiser, an accomplished guitar player and the pastor's son, had recorded a CD with a local singer. And Fox, who studied violin for 13 years, had some song-writing experience. He and Matt wrote six of the seven songs on the CD. The seventh, called "Dust Bowl," was a collaboration of the whole group.

"They had to work fast, because it was mid-August and they wanted to get the CD out in time for Christmas," Jerry says.

"Matt and I practiced intensely for a couple of months," Jason says, "because we knew we had to go into the studio and lay down the tracks on the first take if we could. Otherwise we couldn't afford it."

The youth group managed to record and produce the CDs for $600. On Dec. 10, 2000, the members had their kickoff concert and CD unveiling. There was a potato bar, an auction of the first CD and, of course, CD sales. Proceeds first went to pay off the recording costs and then toward Nashville expenses.

Since that first concert, the group has performed half a dozen times in General Conference Mennonite Church(GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) congregations in south central Kansas. Sometimes the members have done special music for Sunday morning worship and occasionally a full-blown concert. Everywhere they go, they sell the CDs and accept donations. The group will conclude with a home concert and fish and hamburger fry on June

Youth convention goal: survival

Come Nashville 2001, youth will be served a diet including worship services, seminars and even *Survivor.*

Some 6,000 General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church high school-age teens and their sponsors are expected for the denominational youth convention July 2-7 in Nashville, Tenn.

While the convention will feature plenty of the usual fare, an addition this year takes off from the popular *Survivor* TV program to teach peacemaking. In the Nashville adaptation, 10 youth will be placed on "Y-Peace Island." No one gets kicked off the island. Rather, more people are added as the week progresses. And the more people on the island, the more difficult it is to live together peacefully.

"The TV *Survivor* is a microcosm of life in all its negativity: selfishness, power plays, betrayal," says Kristin Reimer, assistant director of Mennonite Conciliation Services. "We want to use this concept to instead promote cooperation—our society's only long-term hope for true survival."

For each of seven 20- to 30-minute episodes during the week, a new survivor will be called onto Y-Peace Island and join the others in a peace ritual and to carry out a mission.

A peace emphasis will also be found throughout the rest of the youth convention. An antiviolence forum will be held on Thursday afternoon, July 5, and a number of seminars will focus on aspects of peacemaking, including the environment, violent toys and Scripture.

Other seminars will cover occupations, prayer, theater, American Sign Language, antiracism, Christianity and science; the

24, two weeks before the convention.

The group has sold about 175 CDs and has raised the $1,800 needed to get to Nashville. "I have to comment on how impressed I have been by the churches we visited and what it has taught the guys about [denominational transformation]," Jason says. "We crossed [GC and MC] lines, but everyone responded well to us. These churches were good examples of what it means to be Christian.

"One of the best stories is when we went to this tiny church in Burrton. There were just 20 or 30 people, but they gave proportionally more than any other church. It was like the widow—so often the smallest are the most faithful and generous."

Jason came to the Mennonite church as a student at Bethel College. Before arriving at the North Newton, Kan., school on a tennis scholarship, he says he had "barely heard of Mennonites." He soon found out, however, and ended up serving with the Ministry Inquiry Program at Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church in the summer of 1999. After returning to Kansas, Jason became youth pastor at Inman while continuing his studies at Bethel. He graduated last month.

"The pacifism and service emphases of Mennonites have had a real impact on me," Jason says. "I saw that there was something better, not only theology but a way of living in the real world.

"I wanted to make a mark as a youth pastor at Inman. I think God brought all of our gifts together at the right time."

Melanie Zuercher is editor of General Conference Mennonite Church News Service.

Of flowers, trees and red-dyed hair

Youth and their sponsors have been busy for the last year or more raising the money that will put them on the road to the General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church youth convention in Nashville, Tenn., July 2-7. Their techniques range from the ordinary to the exotic.

- A member of First Mennonite Church of Hutchinson, Kan., paid the congregation's youth group to plant 2,000 trees. Youth at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan., also took a natural approach to generating money by selling bedding plants.
- At Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Zionsville, Pa., youth auctioned their labor to members of the congregation. But at Southside Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind., it was the congregational members who have made donations to be sold at auction. Among the items are Indonesian and Japanese meals, golf lessons, a pool party and homemade barbecue sauce.
- The youth at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., this past December held a living Nativity and charged admission.
- Some of the most outrageous and potentially embarrassing fund-raising methods are to be found at Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. If a certain amount of money is raised, the chair of the church board and the chair of the congregation have to race each other on tricycles. If another level of giving is achieved, the Goshen (Ind.) College alumni in the congregation have to sing the Bluffton (Ohio) College school song. The Bluffton alumni return the favor and sing the Goshen school song if another plateau is reached. Another giving mark will see long-legged pastor Myron Schrag challenge the winner of the first tricycle race to another race. For another level of giving, the youth group will get to dye red the hair of associate pastor Brenda Sawatzky Paetkau. *—GCMC News Service*

Martyrs Mirror, sexuality, mission work and college. Some seminars will be for sponsors only on topics such as leadership, youth group growth and conflict resolution.

Speakers will be Michael and Addie Banks, leaders of King of Glory Tabernacle, a Mennonite congregation in Bronx, N.Y.; DeForest "Buster" Soaries Jr., senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, N.J.; Mark DeVries, youth pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Nashville; Mike Yaconelli, longtime youth worker and now pastor of Grace Community Church in Yreka, Calif.; Leslie Francisco III, senior pastor of Calvary Community Church, a Mennonite congregation in Hampton, Va.; Mark Vincent, former stewardship resources director for Mennonite Mutual Aid; Shirley Showalter, president of Goshen (Ind.) College; and Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, worship leader at United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, N.Y.

GCMC photo by Steve Ropp

Carol Duerksen signs a copy of her new book, *Building Together,* for youth convention director Steven Francisco at the Youth Ministry Council's meeting in Nashville, Tenn., in April. The release of the book, written for youth sponsors and youth pastors, was celebrated at the meeting. About 30 people from the United States and Canada met for three days at the Opryland Hotel to become familiar with the facility that will host next month's denominational youth convention.

Worship will focus on 'In Christ, held together'

Participants will have a variety of worship options at Nashville.

by Melanie Zuercher

One of numerous speakers at Nashville 2001, Irene Mendoza is youth pastor at House of the Lord Fellowship in La Puente, Calif., and is staff associate for Hispanic Ministries at the Center for Anabaptist Leadership in Pasadena, Calif.

Worship will be a key element of the Nashville 2001 convention, July 2-7 in Nashville, Tenn. Worship services are constructed around the theme "In Christ, Held Together." Lee Eshleman and Ted Swartz of Harrisonburg, Va., will open the assembly on Monday night. The pair have been writing and acting as a team since 1987 and are known in numerous Mennonite congregations for their Ted & Lee comedy shows—largely based on biblical material—*Armadillo Shorts*, *Fish-Eyes*, *DoveTale* and *The Creation Chronicles*.

Tuesday morning's worship will feature Stephen and Kathy Goering Reid, co-pastors of Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church. Kathy also serves as executive director of the Texas Homeless Network, and Stephen has been a professor of Old Testament Studies at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary since 1990.

Wednesday morning's worship speaker is Irene Mendoza. She is youth pastor at House of the Lord Fellowship in La Puente, Calif., and is staff associate for Hispanic Ministries at the Center for Anabaptist Leadership in Pasadena, Calif.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Capetown, South Africa, had been invited to speak at Thursday morning's worship service, but he declined. Steve Cheramie Risingsun, a pastor, church planter and Houma tribal leader from Gretna, La., will speak on Thursday. He is also a member of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and a member of United Native Ministries Council.

Chuck Neufeld, co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church in Markham, Ill., will speak during Friday morning's worship. In 1999, he completed nearly 25 years of work with Mennonite Voluntary Service as a volunteer, leader and administrator. Neufeld is an accomplished musician and songwriter.

The speaker at the closing worship service on Saturday will be Janet Plenert, Elkhart, Ind. She is Latin America director for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. She and Steve, her husband, served as COM/MBM mission workers in Brazil from 1993 to 2000, and with COM and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Worship and music leaders for Nashville 2001 are Seferina DeLeon, Goshen, Ind., a soloist, songwriter and active in the Hispanic Mennonite Convention; William Eash, professor and director of choral activities at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; and Matt Friesen, pastor of Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church and a member of the Nashville 2001 planning and worship committees.

Other worship options planned for Tuesday and Friday afternoons will include hymn singing, Taizé style worship and young adult worship. Smaller group Bible studies, featuring a variety of teaching styles and selection of texts, will be offered in at least two languages during afternoon and evening sessions.

Melanie Zuercher is News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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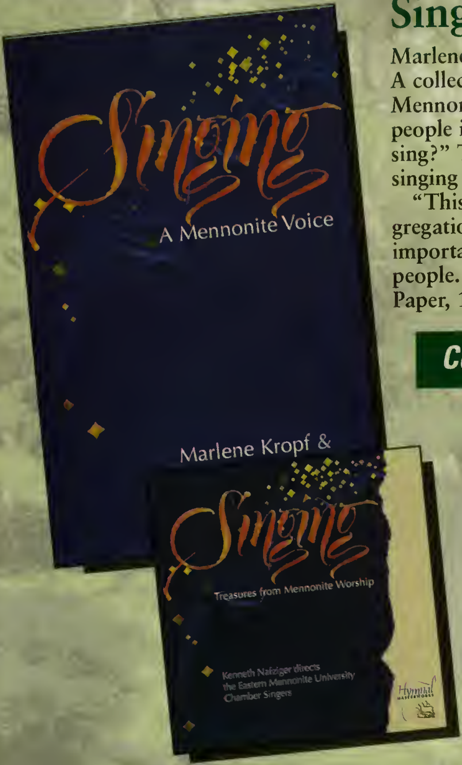
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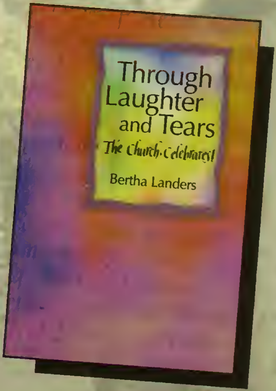
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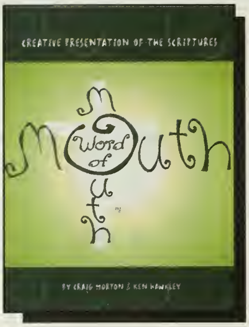
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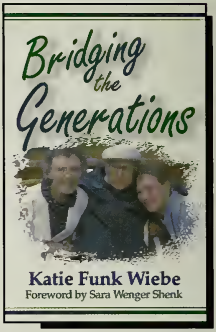
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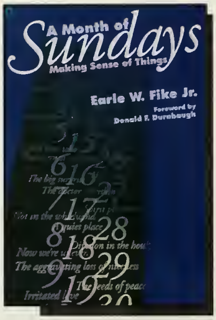
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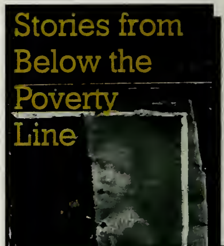
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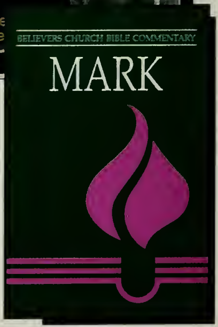
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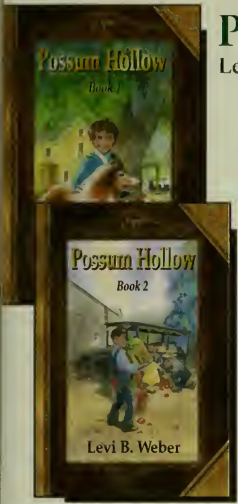
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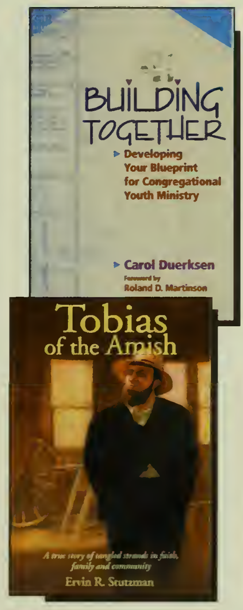
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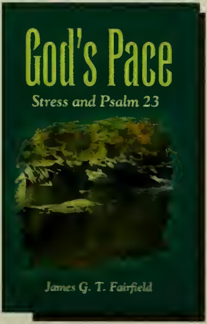
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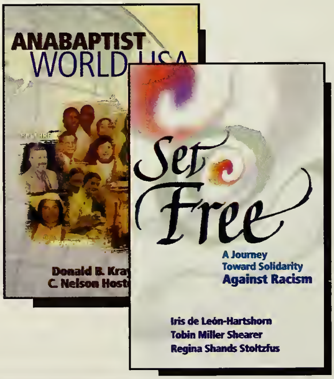
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'The biggest gathering of Mennonite folk and rock musicians ever'

Mennonite music will push out the boundaries at Nashville.

by Melanie Zuercher

Wendy Chappell-Dick has a theory about Mennonite music: It's more than four-part, a cappella hymn singing.

"Can we say we have a Mennonite genre [of music]?" she asks. "[A man from my church] told me, 'I really like Mennonite musicians. Is it because I'm Mennonite or because it's a genre?' My bias is I think it is [the latter]. I've been trying to explore that."

Last summer, Wendy organized a music festival at Bluffton (Ohio) College at the request of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Peace and Justice Resources office. Menno-Folk was intended "to promote the message of peace in the wider community," she says.

Wendy has been putting together musical events for a number of years. Under her direction, in 1994, her congregation, First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, began hosting a coffeehouse once a quarter called Blau Rock Café. "People play music, read poetry," she says. "It has been the most wonderful thing for our church community—it has meant interaction between different generations and has really developed the talent in our church."

Wendy is herself a folk musician who plays cello, mountain dulcimer and guitar, and is part of The Walker House Band and a folk duo (with Lyle Henry) called Peewee & Fern.

Although Wendy grew up in Bluffton, her parents, Bobbie and Terry Chappell, spent some time in eastern Kentucky when Wendy and her younger brother Ben were children. In Kentucky, Bobbie Chappell received her first dulcimer, "and that's sort of what got me started," says Wendy.

Coffeehouses: She attended Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., and while there learned about coffeehouses. She also gives credit to other Mennonite congregational coffeehouses for helping inspire Blau Rock Café and to Menno-Folk events in Manitoba and Ontario for generating ideas for the July 2000 Menno-Folk in Bluffton.

Now Wendy will be taking Menno-Folk to the Nashville convention in July. In between working part-time in Terry Chappell's medical office and raising two young children with her husband, Andy, Wendy is organizing Mennonite music for several venues at Nashville.

There will be two stages in mTOWN, the large activities area at Nashville, she says. "One will be the Blau Rock Café, for bands—not only rock but bluegrass, gospel, alternative. The other is Menno-Folk, for single performers and duos. I'm trying to plan it so that at any given time there are two or three individuals or duos performing, so they can swap songs and sing together."

There will also be a stage in the Magnolia Ballroom, adjacent to the mTOWN area, for classical performances.

Coming to play: She has been "overwhelmed by the number of people eager to perform. This was geared to people who were planning to attend Nashville anyway, but we are getting people who are coming just to play."

She wrote letters to everyone she knew who was involved in music, asking for ideas and contacts, and got about 90. "I called them all," she says. "We'll end up having about 50 acts, which could mean singles, duos or bands—more than 100 performers. There are rock, alternative rock and rhythm and blues bands—and lots of bluegrass. Also gospel, plus individual or duo singer-songwriters.

"Thirty-five of these [50] have recorded CDs [and tapes]. We are planning to have a CD shop, where you can listen to the music and buy it if you want to."

In planning for the Nashville 2001 event, Wendy says, "What has been really neat is the great atmosphere of noncompetitiveness, the cooperation. These are high-quality performers, and they are all eager to meet each other and share their music.

"This will probably be the biggest gathering of Mennonite folk and rock musicians—nonliturgical musicians—ever in one place."

Mennonite artist: Her definition of Mennonite music is broad. She points to Hildi Froese Thiessen from Conrad Grebel College, a writer and teacher, who says that a Mennonite artist is someone who grew up with at least one Mennonite parent or who at one time in her or his life has participated significantly in a Mennonite church.

"Our theology is transferred through our music," Wendy says. "I think of [musician] Tim Shue—so many of his original songs reflect Mennonite beliefs and values.

"There have been a number of people who have tried to make a living with their music in the church, such as Doug and Jude Krehbiel [of Road Less Travelled] or Chuck Neufeld. But it's surprising how many people are working at it outside [the church].

"We can draw people to the church through our music. And I'd like to see us make the Mennonite world more welcoming and fertile for its musicians."

> **We can draw people to the church through our music. And I'd like to see us make the Mennonite world more welcoming and fertile for its musicians.**
>
> *—Wendy Chappell-Dick*

Melanie Zuercher is News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

More than driving horses and buggies

Mennonites struggle to carve their niche in Nashville.

by Melanie Zuercher

Nashville is the capital of Tennessee, located in the heart of the state. It is the capital for a lucrative music industry as well—major labels for both country and western and contemporary Christian music record in Nashville.

This is not traditional Mennonite territory, and Mennonites have struggled to find their niche in Nashville.

The Nashville metropolitan area, population 1.1 million, is home to just one church that can be called part of the emerging Mennonite Church USA. Harmony Mennonite Church, technically part of Indiana-Michigan Conference, has only three siblings in the state—two Virginia Conference congregations in Knoxville, nearly 200 miles east, and an Atlantic Coast Conference congregation in Mountain City, another 100 miles farther. None of the congregations has more than 50 members.

This is not to say that Nashville lacks churches. It is thoroughly "Bible Belt," says the small group of Mennonites who now make up Harmony Mennonite Church, all of whom have lived in the area at least 10 years.

"We've visited a number of churches on Sunday morning," says Rhoda Bowman, who came to Nashville in 1987 with her husband, Ken, and their three children from Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in Pennsylvania. "Large churches are the rule."

There are probably more women in the bathroom of most churches here on a Sunday morning than there are [people] in our whole church.—*Carla Stanton*

"It's common to have churches with 3,000 to 4,000 members, 150-voice choirs and professional musicians," Michael Stanton says. Carla, his wife, adds, "There are probably more women in the bathroom of most churches here on a Sunday morning than there are [people] in our whole church."

Harmony was founded in 1986 as Nashville Mennonite Church. Sue and Wayne Detweiler moved to the city in the fall of 1985 as church planters with Mennonite Board of Missions after another couple had been in contact with MBM staff about starting a church in Nashville.

In a city of large churches: Carla Stanton works at Kids' Church, part of Nashville's Harmony Mennonite Church.

Although the Detweilers have gone on to work with another denomination in the Nashville area, most of Harmony Mennonite Church's current members credit the couple with connecting them to the church.

As a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Gina Bixler was looking to move to a place different from her hometown of Saginaw, Mich., with some Mennonite presence. She made contact with the Detweilers through MBM, which was also the point of connection for Jerry and Judy Gingerich, who wanted to move somewhere they could be involved with a new congregation. After Michael Stanton met his future wife, Carla Weaver, one of their first dates was visiting Sue and Wayne Detweiler in their home. The Bowmans met the Detweilers at a Marriage Enrichment weekend at Laurelville.

Bob and Kay Watson, Tennessee natives, discovered Mennonites in 1988, when their 12-year-old daughter attended a Bible school sponsored by Harmony Mennonite Church. "Wayne and Sue came to visit us, and they were wearing shorts," says Kay. "This wasn't our idea of Mennonites. But now [the church has] become family, and we can't leave."

In its 14-plus years of existence, Harmony has seen much fluctuation. "There have probably been 200 people who have been part of the church at various times," says Rhoda. At one

We'd like to make people aware that we're here and have them see what we're doing.—*Gina Bixler*

time, there were nearly 60 members and attenders on Sunday morning. Now there are 12 to 15.

"Most people don't know we're here," Rhoda adds. That includes other Mennonites, she says, but Harmony members hope that Nashville 2001, the gathering of the emerging Mennonite Church USA to be held in July, will change that.

It is obvious to them that Nashville does not need another church, say the people of Harmony. But it does need some of the distinctive message that Mennonites can share. "The big difference with Mennonites is the peace emphasis," says Ken. "The whole sense of community is another Mennonite tenet."

They are even more aware of this in relationship to the outreach they are four years into, a venture they call "Kids' Church." It began with a group of 8- to 13-year-old boys who came mostly from subsidized housing projects in East Nashville. It is now a mixed group of anywhere from 25 to 35 that meets in a YMCA community center two Sundays per month.

"To remember the children three years ago and to see them now is amazing," says Bob.

"They have grown physically, of course," says Gina, "but there's been a real change in attitude, too."

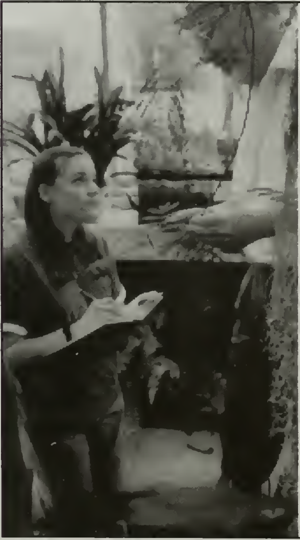
Harmony members see Kids' Church as their mission for the foreseeable future. "We searched for a long time, trying to figure out who we were," says Ken. "It felt like it was consuming so much time and energy to minister to each other [and try to grow] that we didn't have time for outreach. But we have a real passion for the kids—we want to make a difference."

Now without a pastor, the congregation's next challenge is leadership. The kids need a pastor, but so do the adults—as they minister to the children, they need someone to minister to them.

"We'd like to make people aware that we're here and have them see what we're doing," says Gina.

"It would be great to let people in this town know that Mennonites do more than drive horses and buggies and sell vegetables and baked goods," says Rhoda.

Melanie Zuercher is News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.



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God's timing

Gina Bixler's job connections lead to Harmony Church's ministry.

Melanie Zuercher

Letting God show us the way: Gina Bixler with a girl at Kids' Church, part of Nashville's Harmony Mennonite Church

by Melanie Zuercher

Gina Bixler, who moved to Tennessee in 1987, following graduation from Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, Va., sees the path Mennonites have taken in Nashville as part of God's timing.

After growing up in Saginaw, Mich., and earning an associate of arts degree at Hesston (Kan.) College and a bachelor's degree in camping, recreation and youth ministry at EMU, Gina says she wanted to go to someplace different from her hometown.

She got a list of cities with Mennonite contact people and wrote to those in the places that interested her. Sue and Wayne Detweiler, who helped plant Harmony Mennonite Church, responded.

For the first several years in the Nashville area, Gina did jobs such as lifeguarding, summer camp staff, office work and waiting tables. She got involved with the YMCA and has been with it ever since. She eventually worked in the Y's Urban Service Program, which focuses on inner-city youth: teaching them leadership skills, educating them on drug abuse, HIV and AIDS, and other survival issues.

"I soon realized these youth needed to be doing more than just learning skills," Gina says. "I started a Bible study with some of them."

During her first three years in Nashville, Gina was an active member of Harmony, a perpetually small congregation that has never owned its own building. Then she moved to nearby Franklin and joined a church there.

In 1997, however, Bixler was no longer involved with that church and was unsure of "the next direction," she says.

At about that time, J. Lawrence, her boss at the Y, began talking to her about his idea for a "kids' church." Lawrence was working with 8- to 13-year-old boys who simply didn't fit into traditional congregations. He wanted to provide a church experience the boys would be excited about.

At Gina's urging, Harmony Mennonite Church agreed to become a host congregation for Kids' Church.

For the past three years, Harmony has run Kids' Church. For the first two years, the group met once per month. In the last year, that increased to twice each month.

Kids' Church has grown from a handful of boys to averaging 50 boys and girls ages 3-17. The original group has drawn in siblings, cousins and friends. Last August, Harmony baptized 14 Kids' Church participants.

Also last summer, two of the teenage girls whom Gina took to Kids Across America in southern Missouri, a sports-oriented Christian camp for inner-city kids, decided they wanted to share some of their excitement from camp in their own neighborhood in East Nashville. They have started a club called Holy Ryders, which they plan to run on Saturdays.

While the girls themselves are not Kids' Church participants, many of the children who came to their introductory Saturday event are involved in Kids' Church, and Holy Ryders has already drawn some new kids to Harmony.

"I feel called to teen outreach," Gina says. "I also see this as church planting. I have no doubt this is where God wants me right now.

"We started [at Harmony] with what we could handle, and then when the time was right, we moved ahead [with more kids and a greater time commitment]," she says. "We kept waiting on God to show us the next step. It's against the corporate way and even the Y way, which is to go out and be proactive and make things happen—but we've been letting God show us the way in his time."

We kept waiting on God to show us the next step.

—Gina Bixler

Melanie Zuercher is News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Events start before convention

Even before the churchwide convention in Nashville, Tenn., opens on the evening of July 2, participants will have a range of preconvention activities to join, from peace to stewardship.

Peace Gathering 2001 will be held June 30-July 2 at Dubose Conference Center in Monteagle, Tenn., 90 miles south of Nashville. It is sponsored by the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

The theme for the gathering is "Bring Forth the City of God!" Activities will include worship and Bible study, youth and children's activities and a talent show. Seminars will focus on issues such as the environment, immigration and congregational peace centers. The inspirational speaker will be B. Elaine Bryant, pastor of Englewood Mennonite Church in Chicago.

Worship: Three all-day events are scheduled for July 2 at the Opryland Hotel, site of the Nashville convention. "Worship for the 21st Century" is a workshop for pastors, worship leaders and musicians. Leaders Marilyn Houser Hamm, Marlene Kropf and Ken Nafziger will be joined by worship specialists in drama, movement, visual arts, music, preaching and worship leading. The morning session will address worship in the postmodern church. The day will conclude with worship.

Church planting: Jeff Wright, area conference minister for Pacific Southwest Conference, will lead "Foundations for Church Planting: Methods From the Pacific Southwest." Wright, who is also director of the Center for Anabaptist Leadership in Pasadena, Calif., will be joined by other CAL staff members. Pacific Southwest and CAL have cooperated to plant 20 new congregations in the past three years, with a total budget of less than $75,000.

Workshop topics will include church-planting strategies, prayer in church planting, developing congregational leadership, bivocational teams and creating a business plan for church planting.

Stewardship: Mennonite Mutual Aid will offer four workshops: "Developing Gratitude-Driven Generosity," "Stewardship Investing: Making Investment Decisions as if Your Faith Really Mattered," "Life-Long Health" and "Mennonite Church USA Funding System: A Firstfruits Model."

Going to Nashville 2001?

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mTOWN

Conventiongoers can 'go to town' during Nashville 2001.

by Melanie Zuercher

As Mennonite assemblies grow, bringing together the diverse elements of the church for an intense five- to six-day stretch becomes more and more of a challenge.

Dan Hess, an organizational consultant from Indianapolis, has taken on that challenge for Nashville 2001. The integrated activities and exhibit area is being called mTOWN.

At Nashville, for the first time, exhibits, the bookstore, youth recreation and most performance events will be in one place—mTOWN.

"The 'm' can mean Mennonite, mission, media, martyr, music—or perhaps my, as in 'myTOWN,' " Dan says.

In his years of experience with Mennonite conventions, he says, he has seen that "convention means worship and business. Then it became service, too. Now we have added a fourth element, kind of like camp."

mTOWN will be in a 200,000 square-foot area of the Opryland Hotel that has been compared in size to a Wal-Mart Superstore.

"We're thinking of this as a town, so we are setting it up like one," Dan says. "There will be a mayor with her deputies. There will be a town square, streets and many activities you would expect to find in a town."

One of these is recreation. Although the room's low ceiling doesn't allow basketball and volleyball, there will be other sports and games available for the youth, as well as a Tots' Playground.

Another is "neighborhoods," areas intended for youth to meet with their youth groups and sponsors or for informal interaction. The 20 neighborhoods each bear what Dan calls "an interesting, attractive name of an actual Mennonite congregation"—such as Pea Ridge, Plum Coulee, Bean Blossom, Lower Deer Creek or Red Top.

Shopping will be a part of mTOWN—mainly at the Provident Bookstore and the Ten Thousand Villages crafts store.

So will musical performance, drama and visual arts. The Blau Rock Café will be a venue for rock, alternative, jazz, bluegrass and folk bands, while The Performance Series, located in a ballroom close to mTOWN, will feature classical music.

There will be several galleries in mTOWN, including a display of works by Mennonite visual artists, the "Mirror of the Martyrs" exhibit from Kauffman Museum in North

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Newton, Kan., and an exhibit marking 50 years of Mennonite Disaster Service.

mTOWN will also have the Schleitheim Stage, a venue for drama, storytelling, poetry reading and an open microphone at various times throughout the day.

Church agencies and institutions will all be part of mTOWN in various areas. The "Five Pillars of Health" will be devoted to the health-related agencies such as Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite Nurses' Association and Mennonite Association of Retired Persons. Mission and service agencies will be together in the Mission Courtyard.

The peace and justice area will include a Peace Park and a blood drive, and the University Campus will be the place to find Mennonite educational institutions. In the mTOWN television studio, Mark Kelley and students from Goshen (Ind.) College plan to produce a daily news show for the Youth Convention.

And like any North American town, this one will also have a church structure in the form of the mTOWN prayer chapel. Noel Santiago and Roma Eicher will coordinate prayer teams.

mTOWN represents some changes from previous Mennonite assemblies, Dan says, most notably in its integration of exhibits and activities for all ages from small children through adults. "We'll also be having a wider range of activities all in one place than has been true before," he says.

Melanie Zuercher is News Service editor for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

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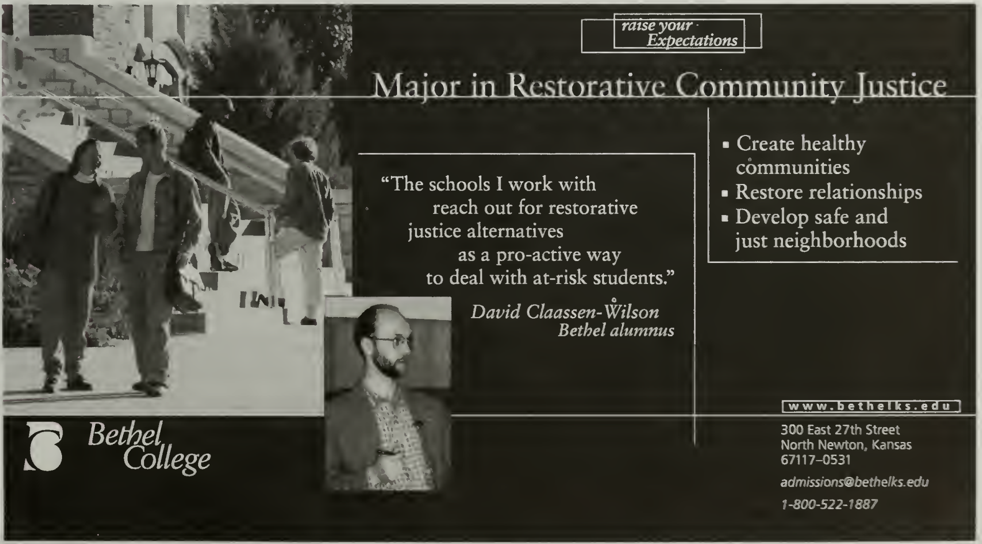

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Volunteers have vest-ed interest

Volunteers will sport homemade vests during Nashville 2001.

Melanie Zuercher

Recycled jeans: From left, Lois Leinbach, Mary Alice Hertzler and Oleta Miller model and work on vests to be worn by volunteers at Nashville 2001.

The work of volunteering for a churchwide assembly sometimes begins months in advance.

Lois Leinbach of Hesston, Kan., retired from her work with South Central Conference several years ago, but remains an active volunteer in the church and community. She served as one of the volunteer workers at the St. Louis 99 adult assembly.

> They decided it was time to retire the red vests, and they commissioned me to design new ones, with pockets a priority.
>
> *—Lois Leinbach*

"In St. Louis, the [adult assembly] volunteers wore these red vests that we had used for quite a few years," she says. "And they had no pockets, nowhere to keep pencils or tissues or pagers or anything else.

"They decided it was time to retire the red vests, and they commissioned me to design new ones, with pockets a priority."

Lois came up with a vest made from denim scraps on the front with a piece of new fabric for the back, on which is embroidered the Mennonite Church dove-and-olive-branch logo, enlarged from a computer file and stitched with Lois' computerized sewing machine.

The vests are to be used at future U.S. assemblies, such as Nashville 2001, or at binational assemblies every four years.

The denim for the vests comes from recycled jeans. Lois has obtained most of the jeans from the Mennonite Central Committee Central States material resources office in North Newton, Kan., with a few from the Et Cetera Shop in Newton, Kan. She also put out a call at her church, Whitestone Mennonite in Hesston, for 50 more pairs.

Lois and two other seamstresses and retirees from Whitestone, Mary Alice Hertzler and Oleta Miller, volunteered their time to put together 66 vests. The cost of the new material for the vest backs and the thread is coming out of the Nashville 2001 budget.

Part of Lois' time included sitting with her machine as it sewed logos—each requiring about 30 minutes. Although the machine sews by itself, she had to make sure the thread did not run out or break.

After hearing people's positive responses to these vests, Lois says, she decided to make other vests from recycled jeans to sell at Mennonite Central Committee relief sales this spring.—*GCMC News Service*

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- **Eastern Mennonite High School** 2001-02 open positions: full-time ***math teacher*** for geometry and math II (gr. 7), and a ***bus driver***.
  Interested people should contact J. David Yoder at Eastern Mennonite High School, 540-432-4502; email <yodershi@emhs.net>.

- **North Danvers Mennonite Church**, Danvers, Ill., is hosting its ***150th anniversary celebration***, June 15-17, 2001. Request registration forms from North Danvers Sesquicentennial Committee, RR 1 Box 67A, Danvers, IL 61732; 309-963-4554; email <rbucher@frontiernet.net>.

- **Huber Mennonite Church**, New Carlisle, Ohio, seeks services of a ***pastor*** committed to serving faithfully according to God's Word. Small congregation of 75 in recently expanded facility with anticipation of growth through outreach. Contact Judy Hartman, 937-667-0287.

- **Belleville Mennonite School** has teacher openings beginning August 2001: ***high school English*** and ***middle school teacher***.
  Please contact Ray Baker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184; email <bmsoffice@lcworkshop.com>.

- **Berlin Mennonite Church** is currently seeking a full-time position for an ***associate pastor*** with a youth emphasis.
  Interested candidates should respond in writing to Pastoral Search Committee, Berlin Mennonite Church, Box 217, Berlin, OH 44610; email <BerlinMC@juno.com>.

- **OMAN OMAN OMAN** Searching for an affordable, unusual travel experience? Join Al Keim and Kathy Fisher for a two-week ***visit to Oman***, land of frankincense and traditional Arab culture, Jan. 23-Feb. 4, 2002, for just $3,200.
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- **Central Christian School** is seeking qualified people to fill the following positions: ***assistant principal, tutor/learning specialist*** (teaching certificate required)***, two elementary teachers***.
  Contact Frederic Miller, Principal, Central Christian School, P.O. Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-7311; email <ccs_fmiller@tccsa.net>.

- **Mennonite Conciliation Services** and Eastern College are sponsoring a ***summer mediation and facilitation training institute***, July 16-20, 2001, at Eastern College's campus in St. Davids, Pa. The cost is $450 ($500 for registrations received after June 15); some scholarship assistance is available.
  For more information, visit <www.mcc.org/mcs.html> or contact MCS, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-3889; <mcs@mccus.org>.

- **Mount Pleasant Christian School**, a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.
  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a full-time ***kindergarten teacher*** and a full-time middle school ***social studies teacher*** beginning in the 2001-2002 school year. Penn View offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for 580 students in kindergarten through 8th grade.
  Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 215-723-1196.

- **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center** seeks full-time ***executive director/development director*** for year-round retreat center/campground in southeast Virginia. Responsibilities include overall administration with major focus on development activities and church relations.
  Send resume or inquiries no later than June 30, 2001, to Sanford Snider, 7140 Turner Road, Richmond, VA 23231; email <snidergs@juno.com>.

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- **Are you, or someone you know, a manager**, administrator or leader with two or more years of experiencing living and working overseas? If so, Mennonite Central Committee invites you or your colleague to apply for one of the numerous MCC leadership openings. This year MCC needs leaders for ***El Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, south Florida, Colombia, Vietnam, Laos and Egypt***. Leadership openings in 2002 include, among others, ***Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Philippines and Bolivia***.

Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Newton, Kan., a congregation of about 600 members, invites applicants for full-time ***associate pastor***. Assignment will be in two of the following three fields of ministry: nurture, outreach or worship/music.

Send cover letter and resume to Church Staff Committee, First Mennonite Church, 429 E. 1st St., Newton, KS 67114; email <ratzlaff@southwind.net>.

- **Christopher Dock Mennonite High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2001-02 school year: ***biology, chemistry, mathematics/science, Bible/social studies***.

Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2943; email <cdock@netreach.net>.

- **Fairview Christian School**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for ***administrator*** of Christian school. School includes grades K-12, situated in beautiful Willamette Valley. Degree in education or administration preferred, experience recognized.

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- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 325) invites applications for 2001-02 for full-time teaching positions in ***mathematics 7 & 8*** and ***English 10-12***. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure in primary teaching area.

Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <akdueck@bethanycs.net>.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***chief operating officer/office and business manager***. Expectations and qualifications: (1) committed Christian with vision for discipling urban youth; (2) excellent management skills; (3) good communication skills; (4) training/experience in financial record-keeping, accounting; (5) experience or willingness to learn fund-raising skills. Responsibilities: prepare and monitor budget; implement development; organize and oversee office records and information systems; implement student process; reports directly to the Board; salary to be negotiated.

Interested people should contact Polly Ann Brown, Board Member, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a Mennonite-affiliated retirement community, seeds a visionary ***CEO*** with strong financial acumen and operational experience to lead its new and rapidly growing campus in southeast Pennsylvania. Located at New Holland in historic Lancaster County, GSV provides independent living and assisted living services to over 500 residents. Construction is under way to add health-care beds, dementia programming and a community center. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive retirement community experience.

Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <KirkStiffney@aol.com>.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community** seeks ***live-in resident assistant couple*** late July or early August 2001. R.A.s respond to residents' immediate needs, provide emergency assistance. On-call half of all evenings, nights, weekends, holidays. Able to assist in emergencies, handle varied duties. Strong interest in working with older adults. Benefits: rent-free 1-bedroom apt., utilities, telephone, cable TV, financial stipend, pleasant living and working environment.

Apply by June 15, 2001, at VMRC Center, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; <hr@vmrc.org>; web<www.vmrc.org>; fax 540-564-3700.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for ***middle school teacher*** (middle school or elementary cert. preferred). Subject areas flexible depending on your gifts. Come teach in supportive school community!

Contact us for details. Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; <tgb@hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>; <www.hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

- **Faith & Life Resources** has an opening in ***customer service*** managing the order line and processing Sunday school orders. Qualifications: people/organizational skills, computer literacy, problem-solving, creativity. Candidates should be self-motivating, sales-minded, enjoy building relationships with Mennonite church contacts and other customers, work well with details.

Send cover letter and resume to Faith & Life Resources, Attn. Customer Service Job, P.O. Box 347, 718 Main St., Newton, KS 67114.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for ***elementary and middle school positions***. A bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

Send a letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **The Conflict Transformation Program**, a master's program at Eastern Mennonite University, announces a ***faculty position*** beginning January 2002. People of color and/or from non-U.S. backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Candidates should have extensive experience in the practice of conflict transformation, international peace building, restorative and social justice, conflict prevention or related fields; have strong interest in mentoring students in a practice-oriented learning environment; have a doctorate in a related field. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of excellence in teaching, with a strong elicitive pedagogy, in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship and practice who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

Candidates send a letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Beryl Brubaker, Provost, EMU, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review of applications will continue until position is filled.

- **Bluffton College** seeks candidates for a tenure track position in ***computer science*** beginning fall 2001. Ph.D. or M.S. in computer science required. Applicants with Ph.D. or M.S. in information systems will be considered. In addition to the computer science major, Bluffton College offers an information systems major administered jointly by the Science Department and Economics, Business, Accounting Department. Responsibilities include teaching courses in the computer science major selected from the following: computer programming, data structures, assembly language, computer architecture, operating systems, programming languages and systems programming; teaching introductory computer courses for students in other fields of study. Rank and salary dependent on qualifications. Review of applications begins immediately and continues until an appointment has been made. For information see <http://www.bluffton.edu>.

Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of reference (submitted directly from the referee) and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

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The fourth dimension of the Anabaptist vision

by David A. Shank

In a major message given in August 1947 at Basel, Switzerland, Harold S. Bender, Mennonite leader and author of *The Anabaptist Vision*, said, "The church of Jesus Christ is a missionary church." The occasion was a postwar youth conference that gathered about 500 Swiss, French, German and Dutch Mennonites with North American Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers.

At MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., April 5-7, 1946, between other assignments and appointments, Bender had organized for MCC staff coming from various Mennonite backgrounds a weekend institute with "Anabaptist Vision" as the theme. The speakers were Don Smucker, Franklin Littel, Bender and P.C. Hiebert. Erwin Goering, Elmer Ediger, Roy Umble, Jacob Goering and Atlee Beechy chaired the sessions.

Littel's presentation on Anabaptism and Christ's Great Commission began the Saturday morning session and became a lens for understanding all the rest. He showed that the Great Commission, which was binding on all members, provided dynamic structure and strategy for the Anabaptist movement.

A major corrective: In the discussion that followed, Bender recognized openly that under the lordship of Christ, this was indeed a fourth essential dimension of Anabaptism, along with discipleship, community and nonresistance. He regretted its absence in his already well-known vision statement. Indeed, he said its significance was such that it called for a major corrective in that the other three dimensions were incomplete and distorted without it.

That corrective was reflected in Bender's message to European Mennonites in 1947. Earlier, in the January 1947 issue of *Mennonite Quarterly Review* he had published "The Anabaptist Theology of Missions," which Littel had presented in December 1946 to the American Society of Church History. There he pointed out how this essential dimension of mission and evangelism had been obscured.

In 1952, Littel's thesis was published with revisions in *The Anabaptist View of the Church*, as the Frank S. Brewer prize essay of The American Society of Church History. The thesis was further revised and enlarged in 1957 as *The Origins of Sectarian Protestantism*. As a further corrective, Bender's Conrad Grebel Lectures, published as *These Are My People* (1962), also accented evangelism as being essential to the very nature of the church's mission. But it never received the attention that his classic "Anabaptist Vision" still receives.

Anabaptist roots: Mission is not in addition to what is essential; it is essential. Without it the other essentials are incomplete and distorted. Evangelization is at the heart of Christ's church; the church in its essence is missionary; our Anabaptist roots are essentially missional. In our first- and 16th-century roots, that fourth dimension structured the other three and made them dynamic.

Mission is not in addition to what is essential; it is essential. Without it the other essentials are incomplete and distorted.

In the providence of God, this dimension may become a more important part of our usable past. Rather than as established religious bodies supporting mission, we may yet see ourselves as congregations sown by Christ in the world, in mission to the world, en route to God's kingdom, of which we are a sign. It's a part of our radical identity.

David A. Shank is a member of Christian Fellowship Center, Sturgis, Mich. He was part of the Concern group in Europe in the 1950s.

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More than harmony in Music City

"I came to the youth convention to meet a guy," the young woman said resolutely into the microphone. "But instead I found a real man—Jesus!"

This simple confession of faith was offered several years ago during open-mike sharing in a mass worship celebration at a Mennonite Youth Convention. The young woman, like hundreds of other youth at each convention, was surprised by God's Spirit breaking into her life.

We hope delegates who go to this summer's Nashville convention looking for harmony will be similarly surprised by an inbreaking of God's Spirit into their expectations for the week.

On July 5, more than 2,000 delegates to the adult convention may vote whether to transform the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) into a new denomination called Mennonite Church USA. No one knows for sure what the delegates will decide.

We hope delegates will vote overwhelmingly in favor of merger, just as they did in 1983, 1989, 1995 and 1999. If that happens, we trust it will be because God's Spirit moved in our midst, creating a unity in Jesus Christ that is far more profound than simple harmony.

We want to leave Nashville saying, "GCs and MCs came to this convention hoping for harmony and they united around Jesus."

The vote may not go that way, of course. Some may believe that following Jesus means voting against such a merger. Deep differences could emerge in our time together and reveal disharmony among us.

Those who planned this convention apparently had such discord on their minds. The controversies over church membership and homosexuality during the past biennium led them to pick Colossians 3:12-17 as the text of the convention.

"Above all, clothe yourselves with love," Paul writes in verse 14, "which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

But denominational leaders, while worrying about disharmony, also have been surprised in the past by God's Spirit working in spite of major discord.

For example, a cacophonous moment occurred in March 1998 on a stage at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., during a joint meeting of the two general boards. So chaotic was this joint meeting that at one point the group simply stopped trying to do business and took time for everyone to ventilate their feelings.

Ironically, this meeting was a turning point in the integration process. Virtually everyone left that meeting agreeing that drastic measures were needed to provide leadership for the process. Consequently, a gathering of determined leaders, meeting in August 1999 in Sioux Falls, S.D., empowered new leadership and opened the denominational systems to make the necessary changes. In musical terms, those leading the process finally agreed what song to sing, in which key it would be sung and who would be the song leader.

Singing, music and harmonics have now become metaphors for the Nashville convention. Moderator Lee Snyder hopes we will "implement what we sing" (see page 5) in the discernment process. Nashville, capital of country and western and Christian music, is drawing Mennonite musicians just so they can perform there (see page 13). Even the lone Mennonite congregation in Nashville is named Harmony.

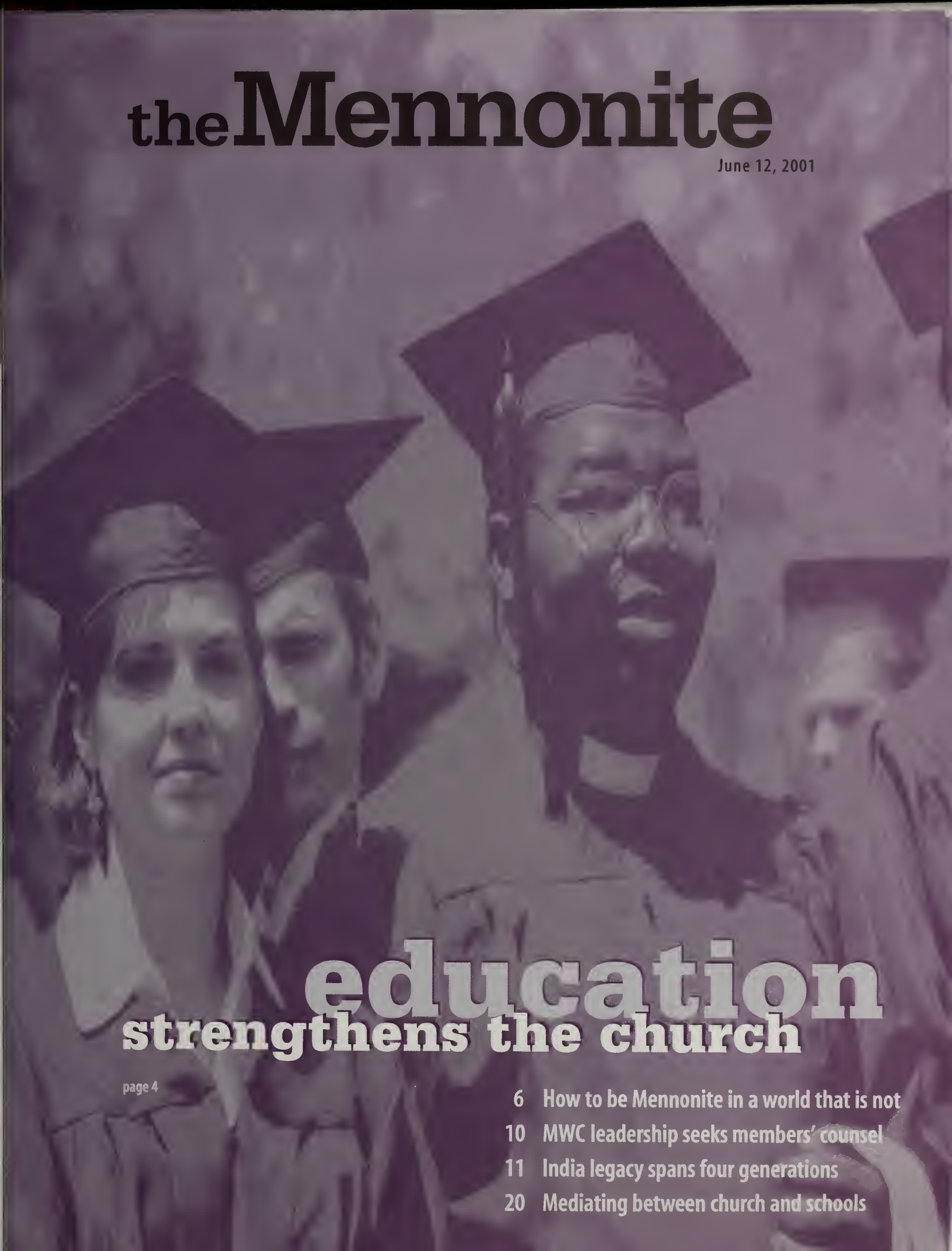
But harmony will not emerge from the disharmony of the past years by having speakers and worship services simply directing us to end the dissonance. If harmony happens, it will be because those present were moved by a fresh and passionate sense of "nachfolge Christe," the German phrase used by early Anabaptists to mean following Christ in death as in life.

In other words, we cannot make harmony happen. We can, however, unite in Christ. If we do, then harmony will be the gift that Christ gives us.

We want to leave Nashville saying, "GCs and MCs came to this convention hoping for harmony and they united around Jesus."—*ejt*

the Mennonite

June 12, 2001



education strengthens the church

page 4

6 How to be Mennonite in a world that is not
10 MWC leadership seeks members' counsel
11 India legacy spans four generations
20 Mediating between church and schools

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Missional vision

"Preach What We Practice" is a challenging editorial (May 15). It also reminds me what goes around comes around. The vision of every congregation as a missional church "across the street and around the world" is really an old vision. In the 1940s and on, I read Mennonite Board of Missions president J.D. Graber's repeated challenges in the *Gospel Herald* of a mission outpost for every congregation.

In reality, the vision is 2,000 years old, with Jesus' parting marching orders, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The missional vision of the Mennonite Church is moving us in concert with Jesus and the early church. The Holy Spirit will bless such an agenda as we go with Jesus' transforming gospel.—*Eugene K. Souder, Grottoes, Va.*

"Preach What We Practice" was really great. We believe it is the most important thing to win souls for Christ, and good deeds can be used to open that door.—*Hazel and Lee Kline, Walsenburg, Colo.*

American consumerism

I was stirred by the imagery Gordon Houser used in his column on the Mall of America in Minneapolis (Mediaculture, May 15). Many people in the North American culture seem to define themselves more by what they have than by who they are. Tonight, on the news, it was reported that a woman, not allowed to purchase bullets because she did not have a proper identification, became enraged, pulled out a gun and shot three people before she was killed by the police. Perhaps consumerism creates an idea that getting what one wants every time one wants it is a reasonable expectation. When that expectation is not met, frustration, anger and/or rage ensue. When consumables no longer meet one's needs, they are discarded.

Suppose this attitude carries over into one's relationships. When problems arise and it is perceived that one's needs are no longer being met, is the remedy to discard the old relationship and go shopping for a new one? Consumerism desensitizes one to the needs of those around us less fortunate than ourselves and promotes self-centeredness. Caring, vulnerable relationships are more difficult to develop; reaching out to others in need is considered risky and unwise. At the consumerism temple, the wealthier one is, the more benefits one receives, while the working poor are relegated to servant roles, and the homeless are barred from entry.

Jesus warned in Matthew 6:19-24, "Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth," "where your treasure is there your heart will be also"and "no one can serve both God and money." In the parable of the sower, Jesus speaks of the one who "hears the word of God, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth make it unfruitful" (Matthew 13:22). In Luke 21:2-4, Jesus praised the poor widow who put two copper coins in the temple collection. Because "she out of her poverty gave all she had to give," her gift was of greater value in the kingdom of God than the much larger gifts given out of wealth.

I am concerned that many who claim to be believers in Christ have fallen prey to the consumerism lifestyle. The shallowness of their relationship with Christ is reflected in the shallowness of their relationship with others. Houser was correct when he warned that consumerism poses a threat to simply walking with Jesus.—*Steven P. Pardini, Waynesboro, Va.*

Waste and wealth

Thank you for Lynn Miller's article "Why All This Waste?" (May 1). This article has some rich nuggets that sparkle in many directions.

"If there is only one of something, then it is truly priceless." Each of us is unique, and each of us is truly priceless. Yet today, many sell their bodies for a price or their lives for a wage or even a huge contract. What are we doing with our bodies and our lives?

"The supreme model of extravagance on behalf of someone else is of course the cross of Jesus Christ." Just as Jesus took up his cross to redeem us, so each of us is asked to pay that extravagant price of taking up our cross and to follow Christ, which includes forgiving and redeeming others. Just as Jesus saw us as priceless, so we need to see each other as priceless. Then we, by God's grace, can forgive and be redemptive in our relationships to others.—*Donald C. Miller, Goshen, Ind.*

The May 1 issue seemed to be determined on rationalizing the tremendous material wealth of our beloved people. I have never read anywhere in my Bible that we are to accumulate wealth. In fact, there are many warnings of the negative effects of money.

theMennonite

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theMennonite
Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

ay readers say

How unfortunate that I had to read the last sentence of *The Mennonite,* which I have highly respected, "Considering our wealth, we certainly need solutions" (Editorial). What a dismal admission that we are caving in to the gods of materialism. Would it not be far more salutary to our people to teach and preach stewardship according to Malachi 3:8-10?—*J. H. Loewen, Saskatoon*

Globalization helps

The headline on the story about Mennonite Central Committee's economic globalization conference says, "Globalization Helps Rich, Hurts Poor" (May 8). *The Mennonite* hurts the poor. And the rich.

I wish the story had included words from George Lehman, professor of business at Bluffton (Ohio) College, who also attended the conference. He said, "My bedrock assumption is that only free trade has the potential to be the driver of long-term improvement in human well-being."

We all believe globalization will mean more capital goes to poor countries. Arithmetic tells us that this will make capital more abundant and labor relatively more scarce. Elementary economics tells us that more scarce labor commands higher wages. Very good. How do we quantify these and other issues? How does George Lehman support his view?

The overwhelming majority of those trained to do this analysis—Ph.D. economists—support globalization/free trade. Generally, those who oppose it can't do the work. To my knowledge no one questions that free trade has greatly benefited Europe. Walmart is flooded with goods from China. We know that freer trade has made this possible. And the people of China have benefited greatly. As did Japan before.—*Allen Stoltzfus, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover photo
by Jim Bishop, EMU

Correction: David A. Shenk, author of "The Fourth Dimension of the Anabaptist Vision" (Speaking Out, June 5), is a member of Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak, Mich., not of Christian Fellowship Center, Sturgis, Mich.

Help our youth choose their colleges

A call for parents and church leaders to encourage youth to attend Mennonite colleges.

by Loren Swartzendruber

EMU photo by Jim Bishop

Encouraging a greater percentage of our youth to attend church schools (at any level) is not about the financial health of our institutions; it is about nothing less than the future of the church.

Parents and congregational leaders should take a more active role in helping their youth choose a church college. It is impossible not to influence the college choice decision; to say nothing communicates that the decision makes no difference to the church or to families, and the silence is, in itself, a major influence.

Influencing our youth in their choice of college is justified for the following reasons:

- studies show that parents are by far the strongest influences for their children;
- no adolescent is experienced enough to choose from more than 3,200 post-secondary institutions in the United States and Canada;
- there is a strong correlation between college attendance and later participation in the church.

One research project indicates that college students (both in church colleges and in other institutions) ranked parents as the number one influence for their decision of where to attend college. Campus visits ranked second, friends third and college admissions personnel fourth. Friends in the church influenced students to enroll in church colleges while friends outside of church influenced peers to enroll in other institutions. That parents are the strongest influences in the choice of college is confirmed by several studies, including those by Don Hossler of Indiana University and Vivian Seltzer of the University of Pennsylvania.

What criteria do youth use to select a college? Perceived academic prestige ranks high for some students. Following a girlfriend or boyfriend is a priority for some prospects. Campus appearance plays a major role. There is no question that major universities with successful athletic teams are attractive to our youth, even though athletic success has nothing to do with academic quality.

Nice trees: The colleges of Mennonite Church USA are academically strong by any objective criteria. Choosing a college to follow a friend, while understandable from the perspective of a young adult, seems short-sighted from the viewpoint of an older adult. Our colleges know that attractive campuses are important for marketing the institution, but having nice trees hardly affects the educational process directly. Church colleges simply cannot compete with the daily and weekly presence of large universities in the popular media.

Parents and church leaders should actively counteract these influences, which are so strong with our youth. A study of more than 3,000 adults in more than 100 Mennonite congregations showed that 81 percent of those who attended a Mennonite college remained in a Mennonite congregation as an adult. The overall numbers indicate that a high percentage of noncollege attenders have become inactive in the church. This should be sobering to any parent or church leader.

The correlation between college attendance and later church participation begs other questions. Can church colleges take total credit for these results? Certainly not. As faculty and administrators we know that we do our best work with those students who come with positive family and congregational experiences prior to the college years.

Denominational affiliation: Is it important to have our children choose participation in a Mennonite congregation? Some will argue that denominational affiliation is unimportant. It is more important to me that our children choose the Christian faith, but I believe every Christian chooses a theological tradition. So-called "generic" Christianity carries theological presuppositions that are as influential as any denominational perspective.

What about those who want academic programs not available in our church colleges? With few exceptions, general education credits from the first two years will transfer to other institutions. Parents and church leaders, if not the youth themselves, should value the courses available only at church colleges (even if the credits do not transfer). In addition, the lifelong relationships formed at church colleges are cited by alumni as one of the greatest benefits of their experience.

Elementary years: National research indicates that the college choice decision begins in the elementary years. Young children are, or are not, predisposed toward college by several factors: whether or not their parents attended college, their academic ability, proximity to colleges and universities, the influence of older family members. By early high school, most youth can name a set of five or six colleges under consideration. A majority of them will ultimately select one institution from that smaller set. The obvious implication from this research is that if parents and church leaders want to influence the decision, they need to begin when the child is young.

Practical suggestions for influencing the decision toward church colleges include the following:

- visit campuses with families or church groups;
- discuss one's own college experiences and relationships;
- purchase church college shirts, hats and other paraphernalia;
- gather information and do not make judgments without accurate data;
- support congregational student aid plans.

My experience and research indicates that many adults in the church care about this issue but do not know how to change the reality that their youth are making these life-changing decisions with too little guidance. Some are afraid their children will rebel. But that ignores our children's desire to know what we think. Some adults choose to make decisions about financial matters without having the facts. Unless a student actually applies for financial aid, one simply cannot know what the net cost is for attendance. Too many congregational members are concerned that we should financially support all our college students, no matter where they attend. The fact is that we do support those who attend public institutions when we pay taxes. Whether or not denominational identity is important is a decision every individual has to make, but it has a huge impact on the future of the church.

I have invested much of my adult life in the cause of Mennonite education because of the impact church schools had on my life (I also attended a Big Ten university for three years to study pharmacy) and on those of our four children and a son-in-law. Encouraging a greater percentage of our youth to attend church schools (at any level) is not about the financial health of our institutions; it is about nothing less than the future of the church.

Loren Swartzendruber is president of Hesston (Kan.) College.

tM asks Mennonite Church USA leaders

Courtesy photo

Moderator Lee Snyder (left) and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman

This monthly feature will resume after Nashville 2001. Readers are welcome to submit questions about the new denomination to the new moderator and executive director at <TheMennonite@mph.org> or call 800-790-2498.

Q **Many General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) members are feeling outnumbered by Mennonite Church (MC) members in the new Mennonite Church USA. What will the new denomination do to be sensitive to this imbalance?**

A The question is a good one and could well be asked about many different constituent groups, such as the African-American Mennonite Association (AAMA), the Native American groups, Hispanic groups and numerous other ethnic and language groups, many of whom are Asian. Specifically in regard to the GC minority, the U.S. Country Committee anticipated this imbalance and made recommendations that help "even the score." For one, the organizational documents specify that the new Executive Board should have a 60 percent to 40 percent balance of MC to GC members for the first 10 years. We expect that other boards will follow similar guidelines.

Q **Will the new Mennonite Church USA relate to Mennonite World Conference in a way that is different from previous relationships? For example, will the new denominational structure provide more financial support for MWC than in the past?**

A Yes, the new church will relate to MWC differently. A primary factor in this shift is the proposed system of firstfruits giving. In this new arrangement, the denomination intends to provide more financial support to MWC than in the past. Mennonite Church USA will relate to MWC as a single country rather than as a binational North American agency. This will allow Canada to develop its own authentic voice and relationship with MWC. Yet another factor that will influence our relationship to MWC is our missional commitment as a church. We expect to see our denomination (and perhaps area conferences as well) working with MWC to develop partnerships with other national churches. We expect (and hope) that the MWC mission conference in Guatemala last year is a sign of things to come.

How to be Mennonite

Seven theses for the classroom and the church

by Loren L. Johns

How should Mennonite educators teach and preach in an environment that is increasingly non-Mennonite? Educators in Mennonite high schools, colleges and even seminaries are facing this question in a new way, as the range of denominational backgrounds at Mennonite colleges and seminaries grows.

When the Mennonite church kept mostly to itself in rural communities, it could operate as a kind of mini state church. Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder coined the daunting phrase "corpusculum Christianum" to refer to institutions and settings where Mennonites assumed majority power (on a small scale) to the exclusion of marginalized voices.

At one time, local Mennonite communities and schools could operate as small, isolated religious majorities, with all the uses and abuses of power that went along with being in the majority. Despite our corporate self-understanding as a religious minority in the midst of a (sometimes) hostile majority, we could, when sufficiently isolated, function as a religious majority on a small scale.

That time is now over for most Mennonite communities. Whether in urban settings or rural settings, the Mennonite church now finds itself in a more pluralistic environment. We face new questions about what it means to be Mennonite in a world that is not.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the church to rediscover and reclaim a confession of faith that is honest, bold and respectful at the same time. I do not share the widespread assumption that respect and dialogue require a lowest-common-denominator approach to finding common ground. There is plenty of common ground to be found simply in being human, with our common experiences of seeking God and our common learning disability when it comes to hearing God's voice.

Christian witness and Christian teaching happen most authentically in an open and accepting environment of mutual respect.

Christian witness must be vulnerable, open and respectful if it is to be authentic. The issues facing the average church member in this regard are not all that different from those facing the Mennonite educator. And though the seven theses that follow pertain most directly to the educators in Mennonite colleges and seminaries, I suspect they also apply with little adjustment to the average reader of *The Mennonite*.

Christian witness and Christian teaching happen most authentically in an open and accepting environment of mutual respect. Whether we are speaking of the classroom, the boardroom or the sidewalk, crucial elements in the profession of faith are mutual respect, sensitivity, the ability and willingness to listen, and attention to power. Since the classroom is traditionally a setting with unequal power (the professor has more power than the students), professors must communicate their interest in shared power early in the term. For only as students embrace their power as learners will they embrace the ideas the professor hopes to impart.

Here are seven theses for authentic Christian witness in the classroom in an increasingly pluralistic environment:

1. Mennonites should avoid the temptation of "corpusculum Christianum." Mennonites are not immune to the corruption that often accompanies power just because we like to think of ourselves as a sometimes-persecuted peace church. Just as we respect and appreciate the commitments of Mennonites within our communities, we should also respect and appreciate the commitments of non-Mennonites within the community. Even if a Mennonite majority remains on campus, we should avoid the use of "other-than-Mennonite" to remind those others of their minority status.

2. Teachers at Mennonite schools should generally avoid using "we" language in the classroom. They should be careful about saying, "We believe" when they mean, "Mennonites believe." In certain instances such language is fine, but in many instances it is a subtle means of establishing or maintaining majority power. Other subtle means of establishing or maintaining majority power is through the overuse of acronyms, such as MBM or MCC. I have no problem with extensive use of such acronyms when everyone readily understands them. But they function to exclude when they are not understood, whether that exclusion is intentional or unintentional.

3. We should not think that openness to others and profession of faith are opposed to each other. Sometimes well-meaning Christians avoid confessing their faith in Christ because they fear that sharing their faith will be seen as an impo-

in a world that is not

sition upon or lack of acceptance of the other. This is unfortunate and unnecessary. Similarly, Mennonite perspectives can and should be presented in pluralistic classrooms as part of the class's crucial task of weighing all things. Ecumenical openness is a condition for making confessions of faith authentic. We must repent of "majority think." This is not just a means to reach non-Mennonites; I suspect that we will find this approach to education works better with Mennonite students as well.

4. True ecumenical openness requires a certain vulnerability with regard to Mennonite commitments. Mennonite commitments must be examined and critiqued along with other commitments. This vulnerability cannot be escaped without abusing one's power as a teacher. Such vulnerability adds pressure to me as a teacher because I want to represent Mennonite perspectives fairly and winningly, rather than unfairly or in an out-of-touch manner. The goal is faith seeking understanding for the sake of God's reign. This means embracing the possibility that I may be wrong about any given issue. I like to be right. In fact, a clearly established environment of openness and mutual respect usually allows me to be more forceful in presenting my perspectives. But I need a gracious humility to recognize that my perspective, or our perspective, is limited in ways I cannot even imagine.

Mennonites must be willing to learn from the insights and strengths of other traditions.

5. In order to represent Mennonite perspectives fairly and winningly, we must know and understand Mennonite perspectives well. Many Mennonites wrongly assume that because they grew up in the Mennonite church, they know what Mennonites believe. We all have our distinctive takes on what the Mennonite tradition is about historically and theologically. But if young people (whether Mennonite or non-Mennonite) are to take Mennonite perspectives seriously, teachers in Mennonite schools must understand and appreciate that heritage. Here there is no good alternative to disciplined study.

6. It is OK to be vulnerable because if it turns out that some Mennonite teaching does not make sense, we should discard it anyway. It is not particularly Christian or virtuous to remain committed to Mennonite teachings regardless of how unsound they may be. I appreciate my Mennonite heritage, historically and theologically. I believe that Mennonites have a lot of things right, which is why I am a Mennonite. But if we wish to be followers of Christ, we must be committed to the truth more fundamentally than we are to Mennonite doctrine, even if we assume a great deal of overlap between the two. If we see this vulnerability directed only to the individual thinker and interpreter, it can lead to a tyranny of the individual interpreter and to a church in which there are potentially as many denominations as individual believers. Mennonites value the wisdom of the praying, studying and discerning community. The task in the classroom is to recognize and accept a stance of vulnerability while valuing participation in the discerning community—both the classroom and the larger believing community.

In practical terms, this means Mennonites must be willing to learn from the insights and strengths of other traditions. Vulnerability does not mean trying to treat all traditions equally or starting at zero every time. Mennonite institutions may give privilege to Mennonite agenda and focus on Mennonite questions and issues. The vulnerability comes when we refuse to give privilege to Mennonite answers to such questions in a way that manipulates or excludes marginal voices. Embracing such vulnerability means our schools and churches need to hire knowledgeable and committed teachers and pastors capable of representing and communicating the tradition well.

7. The abuse of power in the classroom requires constant attention. When Catholic students ask why the church teaches the perpetual virginity of Mary, for instance, I find it challenging as a Mennonite who does not share that view to explain historically how and why the development of that view makes a certain sense. In my explanation, I try to explain other views on Mary, but my aim is to be appreciative, respectful, discerning and empowering of the student at the same time. I remember with regret those times I expressed disdain toward a student's theology, since in failing to take a student seriously I failed to give him or her a chance to take another perspective seriously.

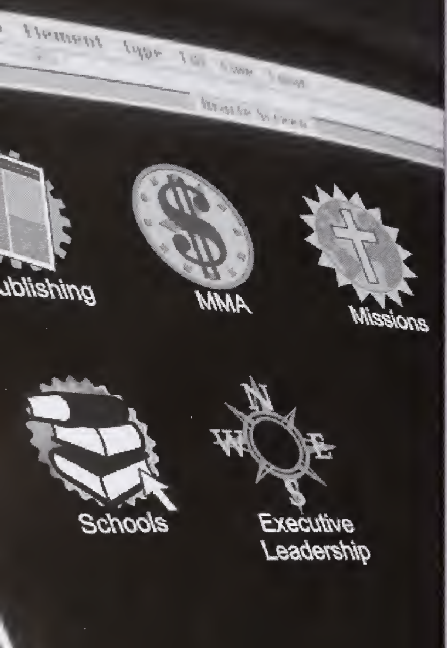
I have power in the classroom. But my responsibility is to use that power to empower the students, to encourage them to open themselves to the lordship of Christ in such a way that I open myself to Christ's lordship as well.

Loren L. Johns is dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Photographs

a profile

Mennonite Education Agency



Mission

The mission of the Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) is to strengthen the life, witness and identity of Mennonite Church USA through education.

Purposes

- Develop long-term vision for Anabaptist-Mennonite education
- Advocate for the vision and mission of Mennonite education
- Discern educational needs of the church and develop programs to meet those needs
- Dismantle racism in MEA and the schools
- Facilitate cooperation, collaboration and coordination among schools
- Ensure that the common good of Mennonite education takes precedence over specific institutional self-interest
- Provide services that support the missions of the schools
- Provide for accountability and support relationships between the schools and the church

Organization

- MEA will be a legal corporation separate from other Mennonite Church USA corporations, and each higher education entity will be a legal corporation separate from MEA, with assets held separately.
- Board members will be selected by the processes outlined by Mennonite Church USA bylaws. The recommended size of the board is 11-13, with some serving on each of three committees: (1) pastoral and theological education, (2) college and university education and (3) elementary and secondary education.
- Presidents of colleges and representatives of secondary and elementary councils will meet with the board but will not be members of it.
- Funding is received from both church and schools at a suggested ratio of 1:1. Schools will pay for services not provided as part of the core budget.
- MEA is guided by core statements of Mennonite Church USA, such as the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

Executive officer

To be named

Board members

Nominees for affirmation by the delegate assembly: Terri J. Plank Brenneman, Pasadena, Calif.; Jesus M. Cruz, Lancaster, Pa.; Edward D. Diller, Cincinnati; Susan Schultz Huxman, Wichita, Kan.; Paul A. Johnson, Denver; Franzie L. Loepp, Normal, Ill.

Executive Board designees: Rosalind E. Andreas, Essex Junction, Vt.; Anne Hege, Aberdeen, Idaho; James L. Rosenberger, State College, Pa.; John Stahl-Wert, Pittsburgh; Connie Faith Stauffer, Lancaster, Pa.

Agency index:

Institutions related to MEA: Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College, Eastern Mennonite Seminary and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; Goshen (Ind.) College, Hesston (Kan.) College, Mennonite Elementary Education Council, Mennonite Secondary Education Council

Mennonite presidents: Bottom row (from left): Loren Swartzendruber, Hesston College; Nelson Kraybill, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary; Doug Penner, Bethel College; top row: Shirley Showalter, Goshen College; Joe Lapp, Eastern Mennonite University; Lee Snyder, Bluffton College.

Courtesy photo

2,500 withdraw from new denomination

In a one-two punch over three days in April, the pending Mennonite Church USA suffered its greatest membership loss so far as more than 2,500 adherents in 14 congregations withdrew from two area conferences.

During its spring delegate meeting on April 28, Atlantic Coast Conference released 10 of the 12 congregations of its Hopewell District, totaling about 1,000 members. Two days later, Cornerstone District, with four congregations and more than 1,500 members, withdrew from Virginia Conference.

The two groups—now called Hopewell Network of Churches and Cornerstone Church and Ministries—are affiliated with the fledgling Association of Radical Church Networks. Its three-member leadership team includes Gerald Martin, senior pastor of Cornerstone Church of Rockingham in Harrisonburg, Va., and Lester Zimmerman, senior pastor of Hopewell's Petra Christian Fellowship of New Holland, Pa. The team's third member is former Mennonite pastor Dale Stoll of Radical Restoration Ministries in Bristol, Ind.

Martin says the new association was born out of concerns about the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC). A meeting last month in Baltimore drew 34 people from Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and South Carolina.

"The departure from biblical orthodoxy and the resulting confusion in regard to membership of practicing homosexuals led us to call this meeting," Martin said. "We are exploring ways to provide a voice for radical Christianity, calling church leadership back to its spiritual and theological roots."

Hopewell's withdrawal leaves Atlantic Coast with about 4,800 members in 40 congregations. Minus Cornerstone, Virginia has about 8,600 members in 74 congregations. Current combined GC and MC membership in the United States is about 118,000.

WCC launches Mennonite-initiated peace project

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—An initiative to help overcome violence that was first suggested by a German Mennonite was introduced in the United States at a World Council of Churches gathering in Nashville, Tenn., April 21-23. In attendance at WCC's invitation were three U.S. Mennonites, even though no North American Mennonite denomination is a WCC member.

"The gathering was an opportunity for WCC representatives from North America to plan together how they will encourage their denominations to meet the goals of the Decade to Overcome Violence," says Susan Mark Landis, Mennonite Church peace and justice minister.

The Decade to Overcome Violence was adopted in 1998 at the WCC's eighth assembly held in Harare, Zimbabwe. The proposal was made by Fernando Ens, a German Mennonite and member of the WCC's Central Committee who had studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind. The measure dedicates the first decade of the 21st century to initiatives addressing various forms of violence, including domestic, sexual, economic, environmental and racial.

The U.S. office of the WCC devoted its annual meeting to the Decade to Overcome Violence and asked Mennonites to join the event. The WCC recently recognized "the steady witness of the historic peace churches." In addition to Landis, at the meeting were Kathleen Kern of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and Tom Finger, a representative of the General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church Interchurch Relations Committee.

Kern told the Nashville meeting about her CPT experiences in Hebron, West Bank, watching the destruction of a Palestinian family's home by Israeli authorities. "What if there had been a team of four on the roof of every house threatened with demolition in the West Bank, or a team of Christians in every Haitian village during the coup?" Kern asked.

Representatives from Church of the Brethren and Friends United Meeting, which also support CPT, suggested that the Decade to Overcome Violence could be an opportunity for CPT to expand its ministry. Nashville meeting participants encouraged CPT to be involved in teaching with other Christian churches about ways of actively overcoming violence.

Of the more than 300 WCC member churches, only three are Mennonite: conferences from northern Germany, the Netherlands and Congo.—*GCMC News Service*

MMA meeting aids Minnesota church

Mandy Hang was the last to share her story. But hers was the most moving one.

Hang is the Mennonite Mutual Aid congregational advocate for United Hmong Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, which is pastored by her husband, Fong. She attended MMA's recent national conference for field representatives, where she related her congregation's struggles to remain open.

United Hmong is made up mostly of middle-aged Laotians who don't speak English. Resources are tight, and the congregation has been meeting in homes because with a budget of $12,000, it could not continue to rent space in a local Lutheran church.

Touched by Hang's story, other meeting participants decided to help, donating the offering from their conference's Sunday-morning worship service to United Hmong. About $2,500 was contributed.—*MMA News Service*

MWC leadership to seek members' counsel in order to put 'flesh and bone' to organization

Mennonite World Conference (MWC) leaders have a vision for an expanded role for the organization. Now they want to see if the idea plays in Peoria, as well as in Paris, France; Pati, Indonesia; Plum Coulee, Man.; and elsewhere across the global church.

MWC's new International Planning Commission, which held its first meeting in April in Fresno, Calif., by this fall hopes to start canvassing Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in all regions of the world about the future shape of MWC.

In addition to holding an international assembly every six years, MWC leaders dream of better linking the various corners of the church, particularly as it has blossomed outside North America and Europe. "More and more Anabaptist-Mennonite churches want to do things together, and MWC is an obvious channel for at least part of that connecting," says MWC executive secretary Larry Miller.

The MWC General Council last year approved program plans to guide the organization through 2003. Among the objectives are increasing "communion," communication and joint projects among Anabaptist groups, including:

- drafting consensus statements on Anabaptist beliefs;
- publishing a French-language version of the MWC periodical *Courier,* which is already available in English and Spanish, as well as other materials in other languages;
- developing a "Seminary-Level Education Worldwide" program;
- implementing a comprehensive communications plan;
- increasing financial support of MWC work.

Some initiatives have already been started, including a youth exchange program in cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee, the Global Mennonite History Project, a leadership sabbatical exchange program and last year's Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation.

"We intend to help the extended family connect and commune and cooperate," says MWC president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia. "Our family has changed greatly as we have grown, added new members and changed color through the 20th century."

To respond better to those changes, the International Planning Commission, with representatives from each of the five continents plus two consultants, will seek input from church leaders, lay members and agencies around the world. That will primarily be done through face-to-face interviews.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Chizuko Katakabe of Japan (left) and Emebet Mekonnen of Ethiopia sing during worship at last July's Mennonite World Conference meetings in Guatemala City. A new MWC committee plans on seeking input from members around the globe in order to shape the organization's future work.

"It's going to have to be a combination of piggybacking [interviews with other MWC events] ... as well as persons being asked specifically to go out and get information," says Ray Brubacher, MWC's director of special projects.

The commission hopes to have its work done within two years in order to bring recommendations to the next MWC assembly, scheduled for Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in August 2003.

"I continue to believe that the real and present danger for MWC is too little flesh and bone to enable the community and [the] cooperation people long for," Krisetya says.

But MWC leaders are wary of discussions about increasing the structure of what has been a lean organization. "In the [global] North, there is a sense of having too much structure already," says executive secretary Larry Miller. "So why should there be more? Just relate directly and freely."

Meanwhile in the South, Krisetya says, "There is a sense that structures have been hierarchical, dominated by the North. So our first impulse is to ask why there should be more."

Yet more may be inevitable. "Nearly everyone is open, in theory and theology, to more exchange, sharing interdependence," Krisetya says. "And most people agree that is not possible without some continuity and relative permanence in the relationships."—*Rich Preheim with MWC News Service*

Coordinator named for MWC assembly

A Brethren in Christ (BIC) pharmacist from Harare, Zimbabwe, has been selected coordinator for Mennonite World Conference's next scheduled assembly, to be held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in August 2003.

Dumisinkosi Dothan Moyo will relate to the subcommittees arranging and programming for the assembly. MWC has rented office space in Bulawayo adjacent to the national BIC headquarters and the Mennonite Central Committee office.

Dothan and his wife manage a small but growing pharmaceutical wholesale business.

He has been a member of Mount Pleasant BIC Church in Harare for 15 years and has served as congregational chair, vice chair and secretary. He is also chair of a regional group of six BIC congregations.—*MWC News Service*

India legacy spans four generations

Descendants of early MBM workers hear homing call

ELKHART, Ind.—In 1926, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) workers Lloy and Elizabeth Kniss went to India with their infant son Paul and a desire to serve. They may have hoped that their time in India would have an impact on themselves and the church there. They certainly had a lasting impact on their children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren.

While they were in India, Lloy and Elizabeth had two more children, Esther and Mark. By the time the Knisses returned to the United States in 1942, the children had formed a close bond with the people and culture of India. As if following a homing call, family members have maintained their ties to India by returning for long- and short-term visits and mission trips.

Mark and Paul Kniss served in India for extended MBM terms. Paul and his family were in India from 1950 to 1993, while Mark and his family served from 1959 to 1973. Both have returned a number of times for short-term assignments.

"During my growing-up years in India," Mark says, "I was able to see in a limited way the joy and burden my parents had for the salvation of the people and also the growth of the Mennonite Church in India."

After returning to the United States in 1973, Mark's family continued to maintain ties to India. His children have returned to visit and work in India. His daughter and her husband, Lois Ellen and Dale Jones, returned with their children to teach at Woodstock School in Mussoorie from 1987 to 1990 and have since returned to visit. Mark's youngest son and his wife, Eric and Brenda, went to India in 1998 to visit and to work for a couple of weeks at Nav Jivan Hospital in Tumbagarah.

Esther and her husband, Myron Augsburger, have also maintained ties to India. She has used her gifts as an artist to serve India over the years. She has been involved in conferences for Christians in art and has created sculptures for the churches in India commemorating 100 years of Mennonite presence in that country. The Augsburgers' sons have also visited India.

While some children of missionaries may harbor resentment, the Kniss children are thankful for their time in India and their parents' ministry. "People often ask us what made the difference in our feelings for India from some other children," Esther says. "[Our parents] allowed us to be as Indian in our daily lives as we wanted to. They also never complained about the hardships of life in India.

"They always carried the attitude that they loved it and that it was a real privilege to be there."

Like other members of the family, Esther keeps in touch with Indian friends she made as a child. These relationships have helped the Kniss family stay connected to India. "We all have much desire to go back," she says, "and the people there are very dear to us."

The Knisses aren't the only MBM family to have a multigenerational presence in India. Peter A. and Helena Friesen went with MBM in 1907. Their son, John A., and his son, G. Weldon, later also served in India. Sam and Nellie King's sons, John and Stanley, also followed their parents' lead and went to India with MBM.—*Joni Sancken of MBM News Service*

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

A handful of cold water

Residents of the village of Saubeba on the Indonesian island of Irian Jaya offer water to Mennonite Central Committee workers Jeff Yoder (left) and M. Marisan (center). Yoder and Marisan recently worked with the community to bring running water to the village from a nearby spring. The water, available from 14 taps, is shared by some 60 households.

Overseas veteran dies at age 94

Ruth Ressler, daughter of the Mennonite Church's first overseas missionary and who became a longtime worker herself, died May 1 after a series of strokes. She was 94 and had been living in a nursing home in Orrville, Ohio.

Ressler was born in 1906 in Dhamtari, India, to Jacob A. and Lina Zook Ressler and spent the first two years of her life in that country. Ressler's father had gone to India in 1899 with W.B. and Alice Page as the first missionaries appointed by the Mennonite Church.

Ressler and her sister, Rhoda, who is four years younger, went to Japan in 1949, where they remained for the next 25 years, serving terms with both Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee. The sisters retired to Orrville in 1974. Ressler is survived by Rhoda.

Task force considers ideas for care of the creation

NEW ORLEANS—The upcoming General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in Nashville, Tenn., should be about the future of the earth as well as the future of the church, say members of the GC-MC Environmental Task Force.

Meeting near New Orleans April 27-29, the task force discussed how it could encourage Mennonite Church USA to "reject the notion of a disposable earth and embrace creation care as a core value of Mennonite programs, service and mission," said member David Ortman.

Among the task force's ideas were:

- Mennonite Disaster Service helping relocate people out of disaster-prone areas;
- Mennonite Central Committee making environmental restoration part of its domestic and overseas service assignments;
- Seminaries teaching theology of ecology.

"What good is a church if you don't have a habitable planet to put it on?" Ortman says.

Among its activities, the 12-year-old task force has hosted a theological summit on the environment and gives an annual award recognizing attention to environmental concerns. Task force members contributed material for this year's Peace Sunday, July 1, which will focus on "Vision: Healing and Hope for God's Creation."—*GCMC News Service*

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Jim Bishop

Pinned down

While Kazuhuki Sasaki of Japan watches, Mohsen Girgis of Egypt places a pin in a map identifying his home country during last month's opening ceremony for the sixth annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Some 90 people from 34 countries took part in the ceremony.

After four years of work, Spanish-language Sunday school curriculum nearly complete

An international, interagency project to produce a children's Anabaptist Sunday school curriculum in Spanish written by Hispanic writers is nearing completion. This nine-year program, "Enséñanos tus caminos" (Teach Us Your Ways), is divided into three levels (ages 5 to 7, 8 to 10 and 11 to 13), with a three-year cycle for each level. The first two years of each level are already being used in Latin America and Spain.

The project's coordinators are Helen and Henry Dueck of Herbert, Sask., longtime Latin America mission workers, and Janet Breneman, an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker who teaches at SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary in Guatemala. They have led 16 writers' workshops across Latin America since the project's inception in 1997. About 130 writers have attended the training sessions.

The themes for the various quarters focus on Bible stories, church history, including a look at the Anabaptist movement, and learning to know and follow Jesus. Most trimesters follow the texts of the Jubilee Sunday school curriculum used in Canada and the United States, but some trimesters focus more specifically on Latin American issues and concerns.

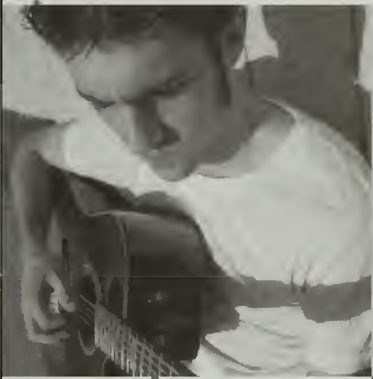
Master copies of the materials are sent to each of the countries in which the lessons are used, and the Mennonite churches in these countries then make the number of copies needed. At the end of 2001 the three-year cycle for the three age levels should be complete, and teachers can then begin using the cycles again. Changes in the materials for the next cycles will be made based on feedback received during the first three years.

The vision for the preparation of Spanish-language Sunday school materials had been in several Anabaptist leaders' minds for some years, and various proposals were explored. But the idea did not take off until the Latin America caucus meeting at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Calcutta in 1997. A proposal brought to that meeting was given unanimous approval.

The first three books were presented and dedicated during the Consultation of Latin American Anabaptist Churches in Asuncion, Paraguay, in February 1999.

The Council of International Ministries (CIM), an organization of North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission and service agencies, has been providing financial support for this project.

"For us as coordinators it has meant a greater commitment than we had imagined, but it has brought us a great deal of satisfaction," the Duecks and Breneman wrote in a report to CIM. "The editorial team, which represents various conventions and cultures, has been one of the best examples of working together, struggling through how to present kingdom issues while growing in our personal commitment and faith in the One we serve."
—Larry Kehler of MWC News Service



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June 12, 1981—The government of Botswana gives official approval to Mennonite Ministries, a joint Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission-Mennonite Central Committee effort.

MBM's newest and last leader takes office

ELKHART, Ind.—Martha "Marty" Lehman, Mennonite Board of Missions vice president for operations, became MBM's interim president May 1 following the resignation of Stanley Green to lead the new mission agency of Mennonite Church USA. Lehman will oversee MBM's day-to-day operations as it is scheduled to conclude its 120-year-history on Jan. 31, 2002, the end of the current fiscal year.

"My goal is to bring MBM to a good close," says Lehman, who is also the first woman to serve as the agency's president. She has been with MBM since 1998.

Earlier this year, Green was named to be the first executive of the new denomination's mission agency. He had been MBM president since 1994, when Paul Gingrich retired after 14 years in the position.—*MBM News Service*

Forgotten MCC project returns dividends

WINNIPEG—In 1984, a series of abnormally wet years pushed farmers in the Riverton, Man., area to the brink of bankruptcy. Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Manitoba provincial office responded with more than $130,000 (Cdn.) in assistance, including three scrapers for on-farm drainage work.

In the ensuing years, MCC Manitoba seemingly forgot about the project. But the Riverton farmers did not. They have been renting the scrapers for $10 per hour, adding the money to a growing fund. They recently asked MCC Manitoba what to do with the more than $20,000 raised over 17 years.

Some of the money will be used for a new MCC project, either assisting farmers in the province or supporting a water project overseas.—*MCC Canada News Service*

Goshen fills new vice president position

GOSHEN, Ind.—In order to meet the challenges of attracting college students, Goshen College has created a new cabinet position of vice president of marketing. David A. Deyhle will fill that post starting next month, supervising the college's admissions, financial aid and public relations divisions.

"This vice president will be charged with advancing our mission to best serve students and families from the moment they begin determining the college that best matches their needs and interests," says Goshen president Shirley H. Showalter.

Deyhle has been director of marketing at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Ill., since 1996. He is a graduate of Messiah College in Grantham, Pa., and is a candidate for a master of business administration degree from DePaul University, Chicago.

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Events

Big Laurel Mennonite Church 50th anniversary, June 22-24, Creston, N.C. For information, call the church at 336-385-6136.

Mennonite Media 50th anniversary celebration, July 27-29, Harrisonburg, Va. Includes open house and former *Mennonite Hour* reunion chorus. For information, call 800-999-3534; <loish@mennomedia.org>.

West Zion Mennonite Church centennial, Aug. 18-19, Carstairs, Alta. For information, call the church at 403-337-2020.

Workers

Coblentz, Diane and Randy, Hartville, Ohio, are beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Harlan, Ky., as directors of Sharing With Appalachian People.

Gingerich, Robin, Parnell, Iowa, is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Klaipeda, Lithuania, as director for the English language programs.

Massanari, Eric, was ordained May 6 as pastor at Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Births

Augsburger, Maximus Ethan and Merdoc Adam (twins), May 8, to Erika (Askins) and Keith Augsburger, Sarasota, Fla.

Bauman, Linda Joy, March 19, to Amos and Marilyn (Mast) Bauman, Monterey, Tenn.

Burkhart, Emma Jeanette, April 12, to Daniel and Gina (Oberholtzer) Burkhart, Lancaster, Pa.

Clinton, Christopher Wayne, Aug. 20, 1984, received for adoption May 17, 2001, by Janice (Miller) and Walt Clinton, Fargo, N.D.

Clum, Dalton Christopher, March 12, to Brent and Heather (Byers) Clum, Lima, Ohio.

Derstine, Connor Allebach, May 8, to Joel and Renae (Allebach) Derstine, Harleysville, Pa.

Estes, Lindsey Marie, April 19, to Pam (Serpette) and Tim Estes, Dale City, Va.

Fiegly, Mason Travis, May 9, to Beverly (Miller) and Travis Fiegly, Hartville, Ohio.

Gingerich, Caleb John, May 3, to Dwight and Mo (Rhodes) Gingerich, Goshen, Ind.

Goering, Kathryn Anne, April 27, to Gene Jr. and Karen (Howell) Goering, Archbold, Ohio.

Huxman, Tyler Michael, March 6, to Christopher and DeAnn (Dick) Huxman, Moundridge, Kan.

Jahay, Chase Feisal, April 11, to Christa (Finley) and Tracy Jahay, Hesston, Kan.

King, Ella Grace, May 11, to Sam King and Danelle Weaver, Indianapolis.

King-Boyer, Ava Grace, May 24, to Dan and Vanessa (King) Boyer, Lancaster, Pa.

Litwiller, Wesley David, May 23, to Kim (Watkins) and Marc Litwiller, Hopedale, Ill.

Massanari, Noah Kauffman, April 19, to Yolanda Kauffman and Eric Massanari, Newton, Kan.

Moyer, Josiah Detweiler, May 7, to Geoffrey and Sheryl (Detweiler) Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Peachey, Paul Laurence, May 3, to Jana (King) and Michael Peachey, Lititz, Pa.

Penaflor, Ysahela Gabriello, May 8, to Beth (Schrock) and Jim Penaflor, Hartville, Ohio.

Roth, Joshua Lee and Katherine Sue (twins), May 15, to Gwendolyn (Boll) and Jeff Roth, Newton, Kan.

Sebes, Katherine McKee, April 18, to Christy (Schunn) and Kevin Sebes, North Newton, Kan.

Snader, Matthew Daniel, April 11, to Charles and Lisa Snader, Oakland, Neb.

Springer, Katherine Ann, May 21, to Cindy (Braden) and Doug Springer, Delavan, Ill.

Sugimoto, Ashley Brianne, April 26, to Chelle and Scott Sugimoto, Reedley, Calif.

Thomas, Clayton Joseph, March 8, to Dawn (Burkholder) and Scott Thomas, Millersburg, Ind.

Toth, Isabelle Katherine, March 31, to Jessica (Mink) and Joseph Toth, Knoxville, Tenn.

Traxler, Peyton Andrew, March 10, to Lori (Lehman) and Tim Traxler, Pandora, Ohio.

Weaver, Caitlin Emily, May 13, to Matthew and Michelle (Nussbaum) Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Weaver, Garrett David, May 15, to Cheryl (Jones) and David Weaver, Akron, Ohio.

Wyse, Shanti Elizabeth, Nov. 11, 1999, received for adoption April 5, 2001, by Jonathan and Karen (Yoder) Wyse, West Unity, Ohio.

Yoder, Chelsa Jean, May 2, to Scott and Wilma (Helmuth) Yoder, Hartville, Ohio.

Yoder, Mason Doyle, May 12, to Doyle and Theresa (Wenger) Yoder, Kalona, Iowa.

Zehr, Lukah William and Micah David (twins), April 30 to Darwin and Karen (Myers) Zehr, Perkasie, Pa.

Marriages

Amstutz/Kunz: Blaine Amstutz, Orrville, Ohio, and Kate Kunz, Ashland, Ohio, April 21 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Aughinbaugh/Suffecool: Cindy Aughinbaugh, Waynesboro, Pa., and Mark Suffecool, Waynesboro, March 17, at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa.

Banman/Dole: Jeff Banman, Hesston, Kan., and Teri Dole, Hesston, May 4 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Brown/Netcher: Joseph Brown, West Unity, Ohio, and Shannon Netcher, Archbold, Ohio, May 5, at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Cox/Siebert: Benjamin Cox, Des Moines, Iowa, and Sasha Siebert, Henderson, Neb., May 12 at Christ Community Church, Omaha, Neb.

Draper/Gottshall: Roger Draper, Bath, N.Y., and Terry Gottshall, Bath, May 26 at Mossy Bank Park, Bath.

Goode/Lehman: Michael Goode, Chicago, and Wendy Lehman, Kidron, Ohio, April 28, at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Graber/Jones: Melissa Graber, Millersburg, Ohio, and Nathan Jones, Sugarcreek, Ohio, May 19 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kanagy/Schwartzentruber: David Kanagy, Belleville, Pa., and Carrie Schwartzentruber, Belleville, April 21, at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Kohler/Reinhart: Melissa Kohler, Hartville, Ohio, and Scott Reinhart, Hartville, May 5, at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Messer/Yoder: Mark Messer, Kalona, Iowa, and Julie Yoder, Wayland, Iowa, May 12 at Living Word Christian Fellowship, Iowa City, Iowa.

Odhiambo/Odingo: George Odhiambo, Kisumu, Kenya, and Christina Odingo, Kisumu, May 5 at Kenya Mennonite Church, Kisumu.

Thieszen/Unruh: Andrea Thieszen, Henderson, Neb., and Matthew Unruh, Lewis, Kan., May 26 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Deaths

Becker, Henry David, 93, Albany, Ore., died April 22 of cancer. Spouse: (1st) Gladys Weaver Becker (deceased); (2nd) Esther Wiebe Becker (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Jim, Mary McDonald, Elaine Page, Ruth Cripe; 14 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Albany Mennonite Church.

Clark, Ilean, 88, Hillsdale, Mich., died April 28. Spouse: Russell Clark (deceased). Survivors: children Galen, Patricia Sawyer; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 1 at Salem Mennonite Church, Waldron, Mich.

Derksen, Lillian Krumrei, 97, Mountain Lake, Minn., died May 2. Spouse: Frank Derksen (deceased). Parents: Frederick and Louise Bicknase Krumrei (deceased). Survivors: daughter LaVohn Olson; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 7 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.

Hallman, Clemens, 67, Gainesville, Fla., died April 17. Spouse: Jo Anna Hallman. Parents: William and Beatrice Hershey Hallman (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol, Cathy, James, Jama; several grandchildren. Memorial service at United Methodist Church, Gainesville.

Herr, Dorothy Musser, 60, New Holland, Pa., died May 7 of cancer. Spouse: Martin Herr. Parents: Paul (deceased) and Anna Mary Good Musser. Other survivors: children Linda Herr Wheeler, Norma Herr Harris; five grandchildren. Memorial service: May 11 at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Keeler, Curtis, 75, Telford, Pa., died May 5 of cancer. Spouse: Verna Long Keeler. Parents: Henry and Florence Keeler (deceased). Other survivors: children Cheryl Hunsberger, Ray, Glenn, Robert; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 9 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

King, Angela, 39, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 29 of meningitis. Parents: Aaron and Betty King. Funeral: May 3 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

King, Harry, 57, Hickory, N.C., died May 14 of injuries from a plane crash. Spouse: Rosemary Gerber King. Parents: Agnes Ogborn King (deceased) and Amos King. Other survivors: children Rodney, LaDean, Sidney, Bradley. Funeral: May 18 at Hickory.

Miller, Edna Houck, 91, Lancaster, Pa., died May 6. Spouse: David Miller (deceased). Parents: David and Pearl Houck (deceased). Survivors: children Pauline Kreider, Arlene Weber, Robert, Marilyn Burkhart, James, Jeanette King, David Jr., Fred, Herbert; 35 grandchildren; 70 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May10 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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Miller, Eugene, 78, Pueblo, Colo., died May 4. Spouse: Hildegard Peters Miller. Parents: Elias and Nettie Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Philip, Ramona; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 8 at First Presbyterian Church, Pueblo.

Miller, Phyllis Chupp, 68, Bristol, Ind., died April 1 of heart failure. Spouse: Freeman Miller. Parents: Enos and Lizzie Hochstetler Chupp. Other survivors: children Cynthia, Sharon Brown; foster children Rachel Davis, Patricia Hostetler; three grandchildren; four foster grandchildren; two foster great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 5 at Goshen, Ind.

Miner, Donald Eugene, 66, Hagerstown, Md., died May 17 of cancer. Spouse: Judy Reed Miner. Parents: Clyde and Jane Miner (deceased). Other survivor: son Donald Eugene Jr. Funeral: May 21 at Hagerstown.

Nafziger, Joseph, 102, Croghan, N.Y., died May 4. Spouse: Rose Widrick Nafziger (deceased). Parents: Christian and Anna Moser Nafziger (deceased). Survivors: children Elmer, Arlene Zehr, Mary Roes, Doris Roggie; 21 grandchildren; 84 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great grandchildren. Funeral: May 7 at Croghan Mennonite Church.

Neufeldt, Marvin, 91, Inman, Kan., died April 23. Spouse: Esther Kroeker Schmidt Neufeldt. Parents: Dietrich and Sarah Balzer Neufeldt (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Harold, Donna Neufeldt Swartzendruber; stepson Clifford Schmidt; two grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; six stepgreat-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 26 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Overholser, Claude, 89, Goshen, Ind., died May 9. Spouse: Gladys Overholser. Parents: Alonzo and Elizabeth Overholser (deceased). Other survivors: children Donita Blosser, Melba Nunemaker, Sharon Miller; 10 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; one foster grandchild; three stepgreat-grandchildren; two foster great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 15 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.

Rhodes, Alta Wenger, 94, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 16. Spouse: Harley Rhodes (deceased). Parents: Menno and Molly Custer Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children James, Allen, Barbara Eshleman; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 18 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Center, Harrisonburg.

Rocke, Eldon, 92, Princeton, Ill., died April 27. Spouse: Ethel Diebel Rocke. Parents: Benjamin and Ella Zimmerman Rocke (deceased). Other survivors: children Virgil, Ron, Elaine Gerber, Jewel Kamita; 13 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 12 at Willow Springs Mennonite Church, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Rocke, Grace Reis, 85, Hopedale, Ill., died May 24. Spouse: Dale Rocke. Parents: Adolph and Lucy Roszhart Reis (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Nancy Nafziger; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 28 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Rogalsky, David, 62, Reedley, Calif., died April 23. Spouse: Gracie Flaming Rogalsky. Parents: Henry David and Anna Block Rogalsky (deceased). Other survivors: children Shelley Sorensen, Debbie Linman; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 27 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Schmucker, Marjorie Weldy Schrock, 83, Louisville, Ohio, died May 11. Spouse: (1st) Alvin Schrock (deceased); (2nd) Raymond Schmucker (deceased). Parents: Noah and Lillie Dintaman Weldy (deceased). Survivors: children Reta Gerber, Ronald Schrock; stepchildren Vera Van Horn, Roy Schmucker, Paul Schmucker; four grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren. Funeral: May 14 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Shantz, Janet Wilke, 45, Bloomingdale, Ont., died May 7 of cancer. Spouse: Larry Shantz. Parents: Bruce and Grace Wilke. Other survivors: children Julie, David. Funeral: May 12 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Opal Miller, 92, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died May 9. Spouse: Roy Troyer (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Amanda Mast Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Muriel Yoder, Larry; four grandchildren. Funeral: May 13 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Wenger, David, 89, Columbiana, Ohio, died April 25. Spouse: Letha Brunk Wenger. Parents: Adam and Amanda Rohrer Wenger (deceased). Other survivors: children Rachel Martin, Glen, Alan; 13 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana.

Yancey, Clyde Sr., 79, Sarasota, Fla., died May 7 of complications from heart surgery. Spouse: Estella Yancey. Parents: Christopher and Veronice Yancey (deceased). Other survivors: children Clyde Jr., Ronald, Eugene, Bruce, Christopher, Brenda Kolb; 10 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 10 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Yoder, Annie Gerig, 84, Albany, Ore., died April 20. Spouse: Glenn Yoder. Parents: Simon and Mary Erb Gerig (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Doug, Don, Deanne Gingerich; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild; two stepgrandchildren; four stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: April 25 at Albany Mennonite Church.

Zielke, June Froese, 70, Hesston, Kan., died May 9 of cancer. Spouse: John Zielke. Parents: Arthur and Agatha Siemens Froese (deceased). Other survivors: children Kathie Keimig, Karen Zumwalt, John, James; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 12 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Correction: In the May 22 issue, the parents of Mary Etta Mishler Shrock should have been listed as Howard (deceased) and Violetta Mishler.

Center Books in Anabaptist Studies

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- **Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center** seeks full-time ***executive director/development director*** for year-round retreat center/campground in southeast Virginia. Responsibilities include overall administration with major focus on development activities and church relations.

  Send resume or inquiries no later than June 30, 2001, to Sanford Snider, 7140 Turner Road, Richmond, VA 23231; email <snidergs@juno.com>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12, enrollment 325) invites applications for 2001-02 for full-time teaching positions in ***mathematics 7 & 8*** and ***English 10-12***. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure in primary teaching area.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526-5499; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <akdueck@bethanycs.net>.

- **Mount Pleasant Christian School**, a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.

  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for ***elementary and middle school positions***. A bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

  Send a letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a full-time ***kindergarten teacher*** and a full-time middle school ***social studies teacher*** beginning in the 2001-2002 school year. Penn View offers a Christ-centered, academically excellent education for 580 students in kindergarten through 8th grade.

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  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***chief operating officer/office and business manager***. Expectations and qualifications: (1) committed Christian with vision for discipling urban youth; (2) excellent management skills; (3) good communication skills; (4) training/experience in financial record-keeping, accounting; (5) experience or willingness to learn fund-raising skills. Responsibilities: prepare and monitor budget; implement development; organize and oversee office records and information systems; implement student process; reports directly to the board; salary to be negotiated.

  Interested people should contact Polly Ann Brown, Board Member, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** 2001-02 open positions: full-time ***math teacher*** for geometry and math II (gr. 7), and a ***bus driver***.

  Interested people should contact J. David Yoder at Eastern Mennonite High School, 540-432-4502; email <yodershi@emhs.net>.

- **Fairview Christian School**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for ***administrator*** of Christian school. School includes grades K-12, situated in beautiful Willamette Valley. Degree in education or administration preferred, experience recognized.

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- **Belleville Mennonite School** has teacher openings beginning August 2001: ***high school English*** and ***middle school teacher***.

Please contact Ray Baker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184; email <bmsoffice@lcworkshop.com>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, a fair-trade, nonprofit organization working with artisans in developing countries, is currently recruiting for a part-time ***buyer*** working with artisan groups in Southeast Asia. Applicants must have knowledge of market trends in North America as well as an understanding and appreciation for the needs of the artisans. Ability to travel several weeks a year and work out of our Akron, Pa., office are required.

To inquire, please email Sherrie Ober at <smo@villages-mcc.org>, or fax resume to 717-859-2622.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***associate director of development***. The associate director cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the Annual Fund goal and manages development office efforts in assigned region. Qualifications: integrity, responsibility, people skills, ability to work independently, excellent verbal and written communication skills and commitment to Hesston College, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Available July 1.

Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; email <elamp@hesston.edu> with questions. Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***associate director of alumni and parent relations*** to begin July 1, 2001. Assist planning and implementing successful alumni and parent relations programs, including annual Alumni and Parents Weekend; acknowledge financial contributions; support volunteer boards and committees; prepare material for Goshen College *Bulletin*; supervise office staff. B.A., excellent relational and communication skills, travel and irregular schedule, organizational ability and computer skills required. Related experience preferred. Must be enthusiastic advocate for the college.

Send letter of application and resume, and three letters of reference, to David Janzen, Director of Human Resources, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060; email <davidpj@goshen.edu>. Complete personnel information form at <www.goshen.edu> under employment. Application deadline is June 22 or until position is filled. Women and members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an AA/EEO employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

- **The Conflict Transformation Program**, a master's program at Eastern Mennonite University, announces a ***faculty position*** beginning January 2002. People of color and/or from non-U.S. backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. Candidates should have extensive experience in the practice of conflict transformation, international peace building, restorative and social justice, conflict prevention or related fields; have strong interest in mentoring students in a practice-oriented learning environment; have a doctorate in a related field. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of excellence in teaching, with a strong elicitive pedagogy, in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship and practice who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

Candidates send a letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Beryl Brubaker, Provost, EMU, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review of applications will continue until position is filled.

- **Welcome to Dialogue Series booklets** explore inclusion of sexual minorities in the Mennonite Church. Booklets #1 "Sharing Personal Convictions" (Willis [Bill] Breckbill, Sandy Fribley, Titus Bender), #2 "Historical Perspectives" (Melanie Zuercher ["Listening Committee"], Lin Garber), #3 "Discerning Church Membership (Kathleen Kern, Dorothy Yoder Nyce, John Stoner), #4 "On Biblical Interpretation" (Walter S. Friesen, Ted Grimsrud) are currently available. #5 "Biological and Psychological Perspectives" and #6 "Discerning Church Membership Part II" in process.

Published by Welcome Committee. Cost $2 each, postpaid. Send payment with order to Ruth Conrad Liechty, 1922 Cheryl St., Goshen, IN 46526. Series and quantity discounts available. Contact Ruth at above address or email <rliechty@juno.com>; or visit web site <www.welcome-committee.org>.

For gift subscriptions call 800-790-2498.

- **Indiana-Michigan Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** to serve churches in Michigan. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to help strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus. They will serve up to 35 congregations and their pastors and be a member of the ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2002 and will have some theological education and professional training with at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references by June 22, 2001, to Jerry Albrecht, IN-MI Conference Search Committee, 1427 McCormick Dr., Nappanee, IN 46550. For more information call or email Jerry Albrecht at 219-773-7633 or<Albrecht@maplenet.net>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

A Dream of the Tattered Man: Stories from Georgia's Death Row by Randolph Loney (Eerdmans, 2001, $22) records Loney's weekly visits with prisoners on Georgia's death row, portraying the relationships with the men he has known and who have been executed. Will D. Campbell writes the Foreword.

Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture by William D. Romanowski (Brazos Press, 2001, $12.99) is a road map to the winding, intersecting paths of culture and faith. It offers the tools to participate responsibly and imaginatively in popular culture activities.

Beyond the Ordinary: Spirituality for Church Leaders by Ben Campbell Johnson and Andrew Dreitcer (Eerdmans, 2001, $16) is an antidote to the trend of mirroring principles of secular management. Instead it explores the spiritual dimensions of leadership, looking in depth at the meaning of spirituality as it relates to the tasks of ministry.

On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish and Brethren by Donald B. Kraybill and Carl F. Bowman (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001, $29.95) is a comparative study of the United States' four major Old Order Anabaptist groups, contrasting the strategies each has used to persevere and adapt in the face of internal and external pressures.

Stories From Below the Poverty Line: Urban Lessons for Today's Mission by George Beukema (Herald Press, 2001, $9.99) presents accounts of tragedy and triumph in the inner city that bring new meaning to age-old Christian themes. From the homeless we learn about community, from public housing residents about servanthood, from a gang leader about grace and from a Guatemalan mother poised to commit family suicide about hope.

From Violence to Wholeness is a study program consisting of 10 two-hour sessions that explore the creative power of active nonviolence. The *From Violence to Wholeness Book* guides each participant, using small-group discussions, insights from Scripture, role-play exercises and readings. To order write Pace e Bene, 1420 W. Bartlett St., Las Vegas, NV 89106, <fvtw@aol.com>.

Christian Reflection: A Series in Faith and Ethics is a new quarterly publication that focuses on a specific theme and includes inspirational pieces, book reviews, interviews, Christian art, worship aids and hymns. The first issue, September 2001, focuses on forgiveness. Order from the Center for Christian Ethics, Baylor University, P.O. Box 97361, Waco, TX 76798-7361, <www.ChristianEthics.ws>.

<www.faithandvalues.com> is a new web site offering faith resources and information. It is a project of Faith & Values Media, the largest interfaith coalition dedicated to media production, distribution and promotion. For information or to submit content, call 859-422-0455 or visit the web site.

Leadership Devotions and *Leadership Meditations*, compiled by David Goetz (Tyndale House, 2001, $12.99 each), each contain more than 52 entries of devotions or meditations focused on strengthening the lives of Christian leaders.

English Teaching as Christian Mission: An Applied Theology by Donald B. Snow (Herald Press, 2001, $16.99) presents details of how Christian English teachers can bear witness, engage in ministry, serve the poor, contribute to peace and build bridges of understanding between churches.

Recommended reading

The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context by Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell (Eerdmans, 2000, $16) is an outstanding example of contextual theology. Here the context is the streets of Atlanta, where the Open Door Community has a Christian ministry to the homeless. It follows a premise right out of Anabaptist belief: "We do not fully know the depths of our sin and the reality of God's grace until we seek to follow the way of Jesus." A must read for preachers.

Downtown Monks: Sketches of God in the City by Albert Holtz (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $10.95) tells stories from the experience of a Benedictine monastery in downtown Newark, N.J. Although it reflects Catholic belief, it is accessible and inspiring. It also includes illustrations by the author.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

Mediating between church and schools

Ever since they were created, the church's educational institutions have at times lived in tension with the church. A popular notion persists that colleges, especially, lead the church astray. Meanwhile, our colleges perceive themselves as strengthening the church.

The relationship between Mennonite academics and denominational leaders has been difficult at times. For example, so strained were relations between Goshen (Ind.) College and church leaders in the 1920s that the college was shut down for a year.

Over the past five years, church and school representatives have been debating how this relationship will be managed in the new Mennonite Church USA. The new Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) they are now proposing (see page 8) is their answer.

More significant than this new agency, however, is the culture of conversation and inspiration that emerged as the proposal was hammered out. If the MEA is successful in sustaining this culture, then old dynamics between the church and the schools will be transformed into unprecedented levels of collaboration and partnership.

When you get people with a heart for the church and experience in the education arena together ... good things have happened.—*Dale Schrag*

This new agency will have a daunting task. Its initial purpose, according to three leaders who helped create it, will be to mediate the conversation between Mennonite academic communities and the church. Although more than 30 elementary, middle and high schools and two seminaries will be part of the network, the conversations will be most challenging with Mennonite colleges.

"We are trying to create a [network of schools] under an education agency to manage the tension between church and institutions," says Ed Diller, who chaired the Education Integration Committee.

The MEA's mission statement calls the agency "to strengthen the life, witness and identity of Mennonite Church USA through education." But the schools that this agency oversees will be serving two masters.

"The church is primary," says Dale Schrag, staff person for the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council, "but institutions have [their programs] accredited by agencies that have no churchly roles."

Further complicating the mission of this new agency are different traditions merging into Mennonite Church USA from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

"MCs answer the question of serving the church in one way, and GCs operate another way," says Orville Yoder, president of the MC Mennonite Board of Education. Yoder adds, however, that in the integration process the schools have been willing to look at ways they might serve the church in the future.

So how will this new MEA manage the relationships of powerful institutions to a new denominational structure?

"The key word is conversation," says Schrag. "Our task in the new agency is to figure out how to enable and sustain the conversation in a meaningful way. We are very hopeful because the entire process has been so positive. When you get people with a heart for the church and experience in the education arena together for sustained and thoughtful conversation, good things have happened."

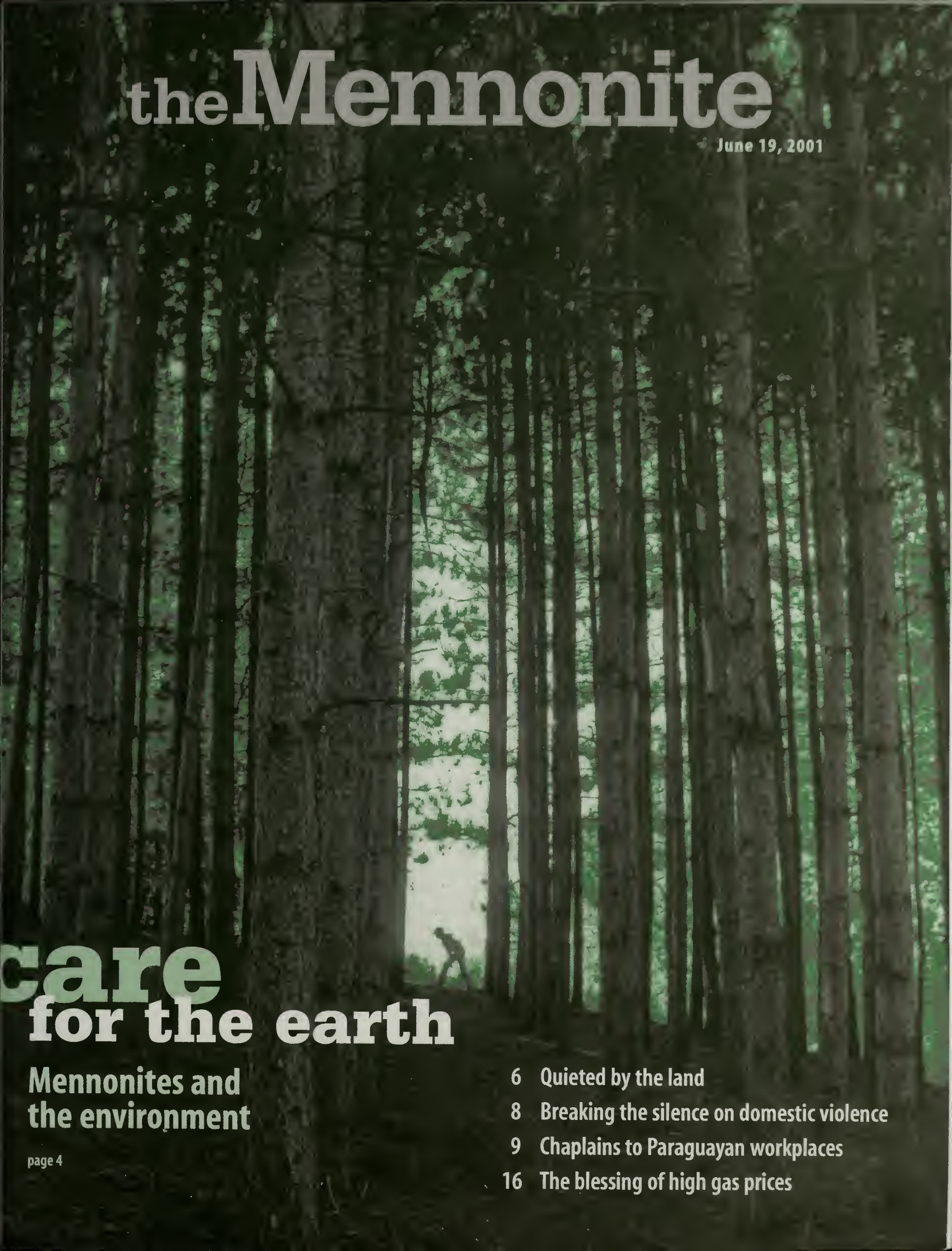
Those good things include the new Uniform Church Match (for congregations that provide scholarships to their students) and a cooperative effort to identify promising new faculty members. In addition, last year for the first time all the colleges in the United States and Canada participated in a joint faculty orientation.

But the most important change is one of climate. Clearly the integration process has caught the imagination of leaders in our church schools and created a culture of conversation and inspiration. This is the climate that the new Mennonite Education Agency must sustain as it manages relationships between our academic communities and the new Mennonite Church USA.—*ejt*

Editor's note: This is the fourth in a series that profiles agencies being formed for the new Mennonite Church USA.

the Mennonite

June 19, 2001



care for the earth

Mennonites and the environment

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9 Chaplains to Paraguayan workplaces
16 The blessing of high gas prices

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Taking a holiday

Thanks for Rich Preheim's excellent editorial "Death Takes a Holiday" (May 22) with its challenge to lift up heroes of the faith who have given their lives in the pursuit of peace rather than the glorification of those who have given their lives "fighting for their country." I use the Memorial Day weekend worship service to portray a peacemaker through the use of dramatic monologue in full costume.

I have found this an excellent way to make a witness for the gospel of peace to our community and educate the members of our church about these saints many know little about. Last year I portrayed Dirk Willems. This year I portrayed 19th-century Brethren martyr John Kline. Next year I hope to portray Ted Studebaker, a Brethren Volunteer Service worker killed in Vietnam.

I say a hearty amen to the editorial. In the midst of national holidays that glorify war heroes, let us as Anabaptists lift up those Christian pacifists who have given their lives to follow the beat of a different drummer, the Prince of Peace.—*Bob Kettering, pastor, Lititz Church of the Brethren, Lititz, Pa.*

Preheim's editorial was disappointing. His emphasis upon memorializing Mennonite martyrs is predictable; his attempt to provide a way for peace-loving Christians to give conscionable attention to Memorial Day is creative. Both, however, are misguided. His editorial contributes to the already rampant myopia in Mennonite circles with regard to martyrs in our tradition (we think ours are the only ones in history) as well as a lack of recognition of other quality, Christ-centered denominations around the world, both past and present. He also seemingly ignores the atrocious circumstances that called some military engagements into existence by naively assuming that all wars are equally evil, regardless of the reasons for and methods of involvement (e.g. failing to distinguish between World War II and Vietnam).

Although I am committed to pacifist principles, I find it hard to understand the virtue in, or biblical mandate for, refusing to join other Christians and Americans in remembering and mourning not only those who died in war (those enlisted as well as civilians) but also the tragic nature of war in general. I, too, think our nation celebrates Memorial Day in a way that tends to glorify war and our military. I can respect those who do not celebrate Memorial Day as a protest, but completely reinterpreting the day would only serve to further remove Mennonites from a position of credible witness.

Additionally, when mentioning those Mennonite martyrs, Preheim fails to mention a larger group of "martyrs" more relevant to Memorial Day: the millions of innocent people slaughtered throughout history, whether the 6 million Jews in World War II or the 200,000 Bosnians in the recent war in the Balkans. Although military intervention is a lamentable way to solve injustices around the world, the very least Mennonites can do on Memorial Day is remember, with the rest of the country, the innocent people who died and recognize the sacrifice many veterans made in bringing an end to gross injustice and procuring peace, two things that a pacifist denomination such as ours could not attain in some of these situations.—*Linford D. Fisher, South Hamilton, Mass.*

Welcoming performance?

"*Godspell* the Musical Becomes a Ministry" illustrates the reason productions such as this probably should not be performed in public schools . My son's school, Minneapolis South High School, presented *Godspell* several years ago. The cast and crew included Christians, Jews, Muslims, atheists, agnostics and who knows what other religious groups. Like the students at Goessel (Kan.) High School, they had group-bonding exercises and formed strong personal ties. But they were based on the theatrical production, not on a particular religious preference. Certainly some of the students and members of the audience felt the production brought them, as individuals, a profound religious experience. Still, the point of the production was as a theatrical piece, not a religious one, and all students were welcome to participate and to attend the performances.

The article, however, suggests that the Goessel production focused on the religious aspect of the play. The use of scholastic theater as ministry has no place in public schools, regardless of our personal religious preferences or feelings about evangelism. While non-Christians probably were not specifically excluded, my guess is that they would not have been completely welcomed as cast or crew. In fact, the article suggests that all the students, aside from one Baptist, have Mennonite ties. Public schools with a high preponderance of one religion, let alone one denomination, have a particular responsibility to ensure that all the students are welcomed equally into all aspects of

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readers say

the life of the school. I hope that any future artistic endeavors at Goessel High School are done in such a way that they are more welcoming to the entire student body, not just those who are Christian.—*Robert Mack, Minneapolis*

Listening and hearing

We are a small group of mission workers who have lived for most of our adult lives on three different continents. Within the past year, we have found ourselves in North America, the continent of our birth. We gather weekly to support one another as we struggle with the unease of knowing who we are in this context. Given our circumstances, we were among those disturbed by Tobin Miller Shearer's two articles on "fake Latinos" ("Fake Latinos," Jan. 9, "Following 'Fake Latinos', " May 1).

Although Shearer puts a high value on listening, neither article shows any evidence that he has heard the returned mission/service workers he judges. He attributes their identity confusion solely to racism. Racism cannot be the main explanation, however, because some degree of identity confusion is simply the natural result of living between cultures, at least for those who have immersed themselves in another culture. Adequate listening must involve some compassion for the intellectual, emotional and spiritual strain built into their intercultural predicament.

"Following 'Fake Latinos' " compounds the problem, as Shearer recognizes no merit in his critics' arguments. It appears that his rightness is confirmed by both the affirmations of his friends and the criticisms of his opponents. Those who covet being listened to need to demonstrate that they are listening and hearing.—*Joe and Linda Liechty, Goshen, Ind.; Lynda and Rod Hollinger-Janzen, Goshen, Ind.; Janet and Steve Plenert, Elkhart, Ind.*

**Cover photo
by David Hiebert**

Mennonites and the environment

We need to move from being the "quiet in the land" to making stewardship of creation a central part of our faith.

by Eric Kurtz

We have heard the doom and gloom from environmentalists: species going extinct, pollution in our air and water, the planet heating up like a greenhouse. Should Mennonites care what happens to the earth? Are these secondary concerns that have nothing to do with loving God and our neighbor?

Christians from a variety of traditions are making the environment a central part of their faith. They point to Genesis 1 and 2, where God created a good earth and asked people to care for it. Patriarch Bartholomew of the Eastern Orthodox Church and Pope John Paul II, among other leaders, have spoken out about the need to protect the natural world.

> If the earth belongs to God, and God wants its provisions to extend to all, then we must not only share with all but treat the land in a way that will provide for future generations.

Other groups have made noise in the political and academic worlds. In 1995, the Evangelical Environmental Network publicly opposed weakening the Endangered Species Act, calling it "our Noah's Ark" that "Congress and special interests are trying to sink." The United Church of Christ commissioned groundbreaking studies showing that pollution affects communities of color more than white communities.

We Mennonites have not made God's creation a priority. If we continue to live as "the quiet in the land," how much longer will there be any land?

Stewardship, not ownership: In secular and Christian environmental circles, stewardship has become a popular word to describe our responsibility to care for the earth. Early Anabaptists in Europe were literal stewards of the land they occupied, taking care of land owned by the nobility.

That serves as a model for stewardship of the whole earth: God is creator and owner of the world, and people live here as caretakers. Besides the Creation story, the biblical basis for earth stewardship comes from verses such as, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1) and, "The land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants" (Leviticus 25:23).

Mennonites tend to think of stewardship as an economic term. This is appropriate, but only if we think of economy in the broadest sense: the self-management or functioning of the earth as a whole. This meaning comes from the root "eco" ("home"), which is also a part of "ecology." In this broader view, money—created by people, not God—is just a replacement for the fruits of our earthly home, which God has created for all people.

Mutual aid: Environmental stewardship requires this shift in our attitude toward the earth, an attitude our Anabaptist forebears expressed. Peter Riedeman, a Hutterite writing in 1542, insisted we share all our possessions in the same way we share the sunshine and the air we breathe. Menno Simons said Christians could own private property, but he urged them to share with anyone in need—the concept of mutual aid.

These views provide a powerful alternative to the prevailing ideology that individual property owners have the right to treat their land and possessions any way they please. If the earth belongs to God and God wants its provisions to extend to all, then we must not only share with all but treat the land in a way that will provide for future generations.

This is not a dour, dutiful stewardship but one that frees us to be responsive to God and our neighbor, to live with abundance and joy. Rather than hoarding our possessions and looking for the best deals, we recognize we are merely temporary caretakers of what we have. We thank God for whatever comes our way and try to use it to further God's kingdom and honor the whole creation.

Who is our neighbor? From barn-raisings to Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonites have a history of concern for our neighbor's well-being, whether that neighbor lives next door or across the ocean.

What we call environmental problems have profoundly human effects. In the United States and abroad, the poor and powerless bear the brunt of pollution, deforestation and loss of natural resources. Thanks to service assignments around the globe, Mennonites can tell firsthand how Western consumption hurts the environment and people's lives in other parts of the world, as well as in North American inner cities and rural communities.

A major environmental problem is global climate change. Scientists tell us that major portions of inhabited islands in the South Pacific may go under water within a century, while hurricanes in Central America are likely to become stronger and more frequent. Yet the United States refuses to take any steps that might threaten our ability to drive inefficient

luxury vehicles and consume huge quantities of energy—even though these cars' emissions are a chief cause of these catastrophes.

How long will we continue to blame "acts of God" on our Creator, while our greed drives these changes in the global climate God has provided us? Can we continue our current lifestyles and still say that we love our neighbor in the South Pacific?

Discipleship: I once gave an informal talk about Mennonites to a small group of graduate students from Evangelical backgrounds. I showed them *The Politics of Jesus* by John Howard Yoder as an example of how Mennonites have influenced theology. Two people—both with seminary degrees—recognized the book. But when I held up the *More-with-Less Cookbook*, almost all eyes in the room lit up with recognition. Our contributions to theology have been important but perhaps less broadly influential than our reputation for simple living based on our beliefs.

As Mennonites we believe our actions show we are disciples of Christ more clearly than words—and this might be the biggest contribution we can make to the environmental movement. Many people want laws and policies to protect the environment but are unwilling to make sacrifices in their quality of life. While we need to challenge structures and powers, we also know we can ease our ecological impact—and model change to others—by our lifestyle choices. Our choices about things as simple as food flow out of our faith.

Making tracks or treading lightly? Not only is caring for God's creation consistent with Mennonite beliefs, we have something unique to contribute. We believe the earth and its resources belong to no one but are God's provisions that we must keep in good condition and share with everyone. We have a history of considering how our actions and lifestyles affect our neighbors near and far. And we have a vision that following Jesus means putting our faith into action.

One way to think about our impact on the environment is to consider our "ecological footprint." This is the amount of land affected by our daily choices—from eating to traveling to watching TV. The footprints of North Americans—with our dependence on fossil fuels, food shipped around the globe and disposable products—cover many more acres than the footprints of our sisters and brothers in the South. Our tracks cause the earth's most dire environmental problems.

I would like to see Mennonite congregations and institutions in North America take the lead in finding ways to decrease our communal footprint. Perhaps small groups within congregations can use the web site (see box at right) to calculate their collective footprint, then brainstorm creative ways to reduce it. Some of these may include the following:

- sharing belongings, from tools to cars to living space;
- moving to homes within walking distance of church or work;
- starting organic gardens on church lawns and donating the food to people in need;
- investing in renewable solar and wind energy to heat church buildings;
- making sure those buildings do not sit empty from Monday to Saturday, or even overnight, when there are people sleeping outside.

Lifestyle issues can be sensitive, but we have not always shied away from sensitive topics. The Damascus Road project has helped us speak openly and humbly about racism. The environmental problems of the 21st century—the most pressing of which stem from our North American affluence—require similar collective soul-searching.

While this may be painful at first, in the end the process will unite us and strengthen our faith. As individuals we may not see much difference from changing our lifestyles. But when we come together as communities to tread more lightly on the earth, the change in our corporate footprint is noticeable. At the same time, the process of working together as stewards of God's creation strengthens relationships and gives us a sense of joy.

Centers for stewardship: We should not keep our ideas quiet. Let's tell one another how our congregations are already caring for creation. We could eventually compile these examples and ideas into a new volume of *Living More With Less*, a guide for 21st-century Christians who want to make their churches centers for stewardship.

Stewardship of God's creation needs to go beyond occasional trips to the recycling bin; it should be central to our faith and practice. When it comes to living on this earth, maybe we can no longer afford to stay quiet.

Ecological footprint

Visit this web site to calculate your ecological footprint: <www.rprogress.org>.

The following book has more information: *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth* by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees (New Society Publishers, 1996, $14.95).

Eric Kurtz is a graduate student in the Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin and attends Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Church.

Quieted by the land

by Tobin Miller Shearer

We do a lot of writing about our heritage of martyrdom, but we need to do much more work on the part of our history that has rooted us to the land. In that regard, we're not always honest.—*John Sharp*

We thought we could become the quiet in the land without being quieted by the land. We were fooled. The legacy of that deception continues today. It affects our congregational life, our denominational structures and ultimately our spirituality. For Mennonites of European descent, in order to more fully worship our Creator, we must come to understand how the land has quieted us. If we do not do so, the rift will remain wide between us and our sisters and brothers from whom the land was stolen and who were denied access to purchasing the stolen property.

Acquiring the land: The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church has begun to make the connections between land acquisition and identity formation among Mennonites of European descent. HCMC director John Sharp says, "We do a lot of writing about our heritage of martyrdom, but we need to do much more work on the part of our history that has rooted us to the land. In that regard, we're not always honest." He adds, "It is the last 300 years that puts the biggest barrier [between white Mennonites and people of color]."

During those three centuries, Mennonites in the United States, knowingly or not, purchased land stolen from indigenous communities under coercion, deceptive legislation and outright war. Harley Eagle, co-coordinator (with Sue, his wife) of Mennonite Central Committee work with the Lakota Nation in Pine Ridge, S.D., says, "It is painfully obvious that Mennonites were part of the land grab, the destruction, the whole Manifest Destiny thing, whether or not they were aware of it."

Writer Rich Meyer traces white Mennonite acquisition of Native land in detail in his article "Why Don't We Tell the Beginning of the Story: Native Americans Were Here First." He notes the large numbers of Mennonites who joined "the invading boomers when the Indian Territory [now Oklahoma] was opened in 1889 and after." By 1907 "there were 37 white Mennonite congregations there." (See <www.goshen.edu/mcarchives/mhbarticles/richmeyer.html2>.)

This acquisition of the land was held up by beliefs of white Mennonites such as two couples from Pandora, Ohio, who reported on the "bloodthirsty, cruel nature" of the "Indians" (*Herald of Truth*, Aug. 15, 1892). Such statements demonstrate how easily Mennonites of that era followed the larger cultural assumptions about the right of white people to take over Native land.

Further, only white people could benefit from the stolen property. The 1862 Homestead Act granted 160-acre land tracts of federal land at no cost to the white settlers who received it. African-American claimants were "blocked by lynch mobs, intimidation and refusals of local authorities to protect their claims" (*The Black Power Imperative* by Theodore Cross). Indigenous people fared no better.

White Mennonites participated in the racist ideology of the day that made such lynchings and intimidation possible. A report of a trip to the South included racist stereotypes of African-Americans, noting their "ability to 'take care of watermelon,' childish demeanor and penchant for fighting" (*Herald of Truth*, Oct. 15, 1897). Seventeen years later an editorial declared it was OK to accept "colored people" in the church but that social and marital relations across racial lines should be avoided completely (*Gospel Herald*, Aug. 27, 1914).

What is the legacy? While these historical snapshots are by no means complete, they identify how Mennonites gained access to the land. Many times well-meaning white Mennonites talk about the original inhabitants of the land as if they no longer existed. This indicates the legacy of being quieted by the land.

Sue Eagle says the white Mennonites she grew up with in Canada "acted like the Native peoples were gone. … It was as if we were totally separate from accepting Native lands."

This separateness does not stop with placing ourselves apart from the problem. Harley Eagle says, "Owning the land has caused white Mennonites to compartmentalize their lives, ignore the interconnectedness of all people, to become exclusive."

Legacy one: separation. The first legacy is that many members of white Mennonite congregations have been separated from Native communities. Many of us do not even know that Native communities are alive, in many cases surviving in spite of ongoing oppression. This lack of knowledge not only disconnects us from any responsibility to be involved with righting that historical wrong but also cuts us off from the possibility of fellowship with an entire group of people.

Regina Shands Stoltzfus, on Mennonite Board of Missions' urban peacemaking staff and a Mennonite pastor in Cleveland, says, "The reason rural, white Mennonite churches are able to become these fantastic churches is because they have the land." She sees this as a

Kenneth Murray

Owning land stolen from others has hindered white Mennonites' spiritual life.

point of separation in the Mennonite community. "The struggle for urban congregations of color is a lack of land. We set up where we can, but there's no parity of resource allocation among churches," she says.

Legacy two: lack of preparation. Most Mennonite institutional structures are not prepared to deal with the urban realities facing the majority of Mennonites of color. Assumptions about resources, space and order dovetail well with landed white congregations. There continues to be an often unexamined disconnection, however, with those congregations that have not benefited from that inheritance.

White Mennonite spirituality has also been quieted by the land. I was first introduced to this idea during a weekend retreat with a group of Mennonites from New York Conference. In our discussions about racism they made connections with their spiritual growth being quieted by the land. Conference minister Milton Zehr said, "We need to realize how this has kept us from speaking with a full voice."

Sue says, "Racism affects white people by separating them from a community that has a richer spiritual life. White Mennonites end up not having as rich a spirituality themselves."

Regina notes another form the separation takes: "There is this weird thing going on with people who say they are in solidarity with the poor, who don't consider themselves wealthy, but no one names that they have this land that can be passed on. That person will never be one paycheck away from poverty."

Harley says: "Racism has made white people smaller by using the land in a way it was not meant to be used. When they do not see that the land is alive, that it cannot belong to anyone, that we need to be talking about how we belong to the land, they become poor in spirit, poor in soul."

Legacy three: smallness. We who are white and Mennonite have been part of that process of growing smaller. We traded something away, some fundamental source of strength, when we accepted land stolen from a conquered people. We did not resist benefiting from the wholesale enslavement of one people and the attempted genocide of another.

Certainly God still moves among us. God's love is unending, forever deep. God will always embrace us.

What we have lost: Yet two things have been taken from us in our acquisition of the land: part of our hearing and part of our voice. Every time we use the privilege built up by generations of landed access—not without struggle, but stolen goods all the same—our ability to hear God's voice is lessened. Like the Israelites who traded reliance on God for reliance on kings and chariots, we have traded that sustenance from our Creator for reliance on land. John Sharp puts it this way: "In the last century, being strangers and pilgrims has become more theoretical."

Becoming a people of the land has become an identity, one that has fooled us into thinking the land was not also stealing our ability to speak in a strong voice. Whenever we have settled for political expediency, protection and security, we have allowed ourselves to be quieted by the land. In large part, our difficulty in engaging in social protest and change movements, whether Civil Rights or anti-war, has been a direct reflection of having been quieted by the land. We increasingly reflect society's racism, sexism and classism.

We are called to be open to the Spirit speaking through those who have historically been kept outside the quieting effects of the land. Some of their voices are included in this article. We have much more listening to do.

The way out is also back through. John says, "If we [white Mennonites] can get back on a visceral, emotional level to the place where we were strangers and pilgrims, there may be a way to connect with our sisters and brothers of color."

We need courage and clarity to be honest with ourselves about what we have done with the land and what the land has done to us.

Tobin Miller Shearer is a member of East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

When [white people] do not see that the land is alive, that it cannot belong to anyone, that we need to be talking about how we belong to the land, they become poor in spirit, poor in soul.—*Harley Eagle*

Correction: The photo on page 20 of the June 5 issue was taken by Louise Wideman, not Melanie Zuercher.

MCC conference encourages breaking the silence on domestic violence among Hispanic Anabaptists

AKRON, Pa.—The subject of domestic violence often provokes friction between men and women. It was not tension, however, but shared tears—one speaker even distributed boxes of tissues—that prevailed May 18-20.

A weekend seminar sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Women's Concerns drew some 90 Hispanic Mennonite and Brethren in Christ pastors, other leaders and laypeople—about equal numbers of men and women—to MCC headquarters to address preventing domestic violence. Participants came from 12 states, two provinces and Puerto Rico.

While Women's Concerns has been active in domestic violence issues, this conference focused on reaching Hispanic Anabaptists in their language.

"We are making history," said MCC U.S. executive director Jose Ortiz in the conference's opening address. "We have started down a road with much work ahead. We are saying to the church in regards to its silence about domestic violence, 'Basta! No more!' "

Ten years ago, keynote speaker Carolyn Holderread Heggen, a pyschologist and therapist from Corvallis, Ore., authored *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches,* a book now being translated into Spanish. "For many years, those of us working on this issue have felt very alone," she said. "I'm glad to see so many here from so many professions, because it's a problem so large that it needs us all."

Both Heggen and Gilberto Flores, another keynote speaker, tackled misinterpreted biblical teachings that have been used to support domestic violence. Flores, Hispanic Ministries director for the Commission on Home Ministries, stressed that the Christian teachings that appear to support women's submission to men come from Paul, not from Jesus. "It is poor hermeneutics to analyze Christ through Paul," he said. "Jesus is our model, not Paul."

Session leader Irving Perez, a counselor in Harrisburg, Pa., said the cause of domestic violence is simple: "Men beat women because religious, economic, political and social factors permit them to do so. For these same reasons, women do not leave abusers."

MCC photo by Emily Wade Will

Samuel Lopez of New Holland, Pa., makes a point while Seferina De Leon of Goshen, Ind., takes notes during small-group discussion at last month's Hispanic domestic violence conference held by Mennonite Central Committee.

Latina women are particularly at risk because of their economic dependence on men, Perez said. They are one of the poorest paid groups in the United States, and only about half complete high school. Recently arrived Latin American women are also less likely to learn English than their male counterparts, adding to their dependence on men.

Participant Jorge Saban riveted the gathering when he confessed that he had been an abuser. Growing up in Guatemala, he hated his father for the physical and sexual abuse he inflicted on his family. Yet when Saban married, he let his wife know—with an act of violence at the wedding celebration itself—that he would control her and their home. Ironically, he was also helping lead a human-rights group at a local university.

When the family moved to Ontario, Saban learned that Canadian law prohibited family abuse. "So I had to use a different type of control," he said. "With just a look, I could communicate the desire and ability to kill my wife, or I would threaten to take the children."

Now separated from his wife because of the abuse, Saban eventually told his pastor that he was an abuser. He began to attend a domestic violence prevention program called Men to Men in Hamilton, Ont., and later volunteered with it for two years.—*Emily Wade Will for MCC News Service*

WCC initiative focus of consultation

Nearly 70 people from five continents and representing the three historic peace churches—Mennonite, Church of the Brethren and Quaker—are expected to gather June 25-29 in Switzerland for a consultation on "Theology and Culture: Peacemaking in a Globalized World."

The reason for the gathering, to be held at the Mennonite-affiliated Bienenberg Theological Seminary, is the World Council of Churches' (WCC) designation of 2001-2010 as the "Decade to Overcome Violence." After the consultation, meeting participants will travel to Geneva to meet with leaders on June 30.

The scheduled U.S. Mennonite participants are Duane Friesen, religion professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Judy Zimmerman Herr, co-director of the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Office; John Rempel, MCC's United Nations liaison; and J. Denny Weaver, religion professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Chaplains to Paraguayan workplaces

Mennonite program helps employers and employees

ASUNCION, Paraguay—For Mennonite businesspeople in Paraguay, their terrain is scarred with ruts and craters. It is hard to run a clean, competitive business when you are up against a long tradition of kickbacks, bribes and tax evasion.

But some entrepreneurs, such as Nordahl Siemens, are staking out new ethical territory. Siemens and his family own a thriving company, Atlantic, that distributes building supplies, hardware and housewares. He operates at a disadvantage on several counts. He pays all taxes while his competitors take shortcuts. He has to compete with black market goods from Brazil. And no Atlantic employee gets anything close to minimum wage.

"They all get more," says Siemens, who also sets aside a tenth of his profits for charitable efforts such as buying school supplies for his employees' children.

C. Paul Amstutz is a regular visitor to Atlantic as well as to a dozen other Mennonite-owned businesses in Asunción. For the last 10 years, he has been on their joint payroll as a business chaplain, ministering to employees in a variety of ways. The program, financed entirely by the companies, is eagerly endorsed by Concordia, a joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Brethren congregation, which is attended by all the program's sponsors. Their businesses include several importers and distributers, accounting firms and a car dealership.

Amstutz was studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., when the founding group of six businessmen asked him to launch this unusual ministry. To prepare for the new assignment, Amstutz contacted a U.S.-based association of business chaplains. He received a helpful overview of the field, but it was clear he would have to reinvent the concept. In the United States, chaplains are often restricted to a role as counsellors. The Paraguayans wanted something more explicitly spiritual and evangelistic.

On a typical day, Amstutz, who serves with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, makes an early stop at one of the companies and leads a short devotional for the staff. Then he will make his rounds, circulating from office to warehouse to sales room, making contact, keeping in touch. Last year Amstutz and the other three chaplains averaged 18 sessions per week: devotionals, Bible studies or chapel services. This year they will do more, as additional companies have signed on.

As he makes his rounds, Amstutz tries to pick up signals. An employee may have a problem to discuss but is reluctant to share it. He will take the initiative if he senses a need.

"There's a tension between knowing how to deal with on-the-spot problems while still respecting work time and production teams," Amstutz says.

Some managers resent the freedom he has to talk with people at work. But if Amstutz left it to off-hours, he would interfere with family life. "It's a juggling act I have to do," he says.

The employee problems Amstutz deals with are "a little bit of everything," he says. "A large percentage are marriage and family-related problems. There also are work-related issues. Someone can't get along with their supervisor. Or they feel they've been treated unjustly."

Some employees keep their distance because they fear Amstutz will tattle to their bosses. Some Catholic employees suspect he will try to get them to change religions.

Amstutz

The business chaplaincy emerged following the the fall of Alfredo Stroessner's government in 1989, under which business corruption had been commonplace. Mennonite businesspeople had been troubled by the climate they worked in and were proud of the concessions they had made in order to survive. Encouraged by their brothers and sisters in church, they resolved to become a more visible Christian counterculture and to lobby the government for better laws.

For Amstutz, the success of the business chaplaincy hinges on a consistent witness by Christian owners and employees. Three years ago the program added monthly luncheon meetings for company owners to brainstorm over issues of business and faith integration. Topics have ranged from lifestyle and spirituality to thornier discussions of how to take a clear stand on corruption and paying taxes.

"A crucial thing to making [the chaplaincy program] function is a solid day-to-day witness by Christian co-workers," Amstutz says. "They make the Christian message either convincing or not convincing. If they're not having a good Christian witness, it's not going to convince anybody. … My proclamation will only be as effective as their witness is consistent, and I have told them so."—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

Global talks with Catholics go local

Former U.S. Speaker of the House Tip O'Neil said all politics is local. Similarly, all ecumenism is local, says Catholic bishop Joseph F. Martino.

Martino, from the Philadelphia Archdiocese, is the leader of a Vatican contingent involved in dialogue with a contingent appointed by Mennonite World Conference (MWC).

While he has helped lead talks on the global stage, Catholics and Mennonites in his backyard are also getting to know each other. Salford Mennonite Church in Harleysville, Pa., on May 21 hosted a meeting of local Mennonites and Catholics on the MWC-Vatican discussions.

It was not the first such gathering. Over the past year, members of St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church and Plains Mennonite Church, both in Hatfield, Pa., and Salford have met for fellowship, worship and even a hymnsing.

"It's been a good experience getting to know our neighbors who are Catholic," says Plains pastor Michael Derstine. "We have a common love for God and common desire to worship, which draws us together in spite of our differences."—*Craig Pelkey Landes*

MWC president attends world evangelical event

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—Mennonite World Conference president Mesach Krisetya attended the 11th general assembly of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF), held May 4-10 in Kuala Lumpur.

More than 600 Christian leaders from 82 countries participated in the assembly, which is held every four years. WEF is a global network of 120 national and regional evangelical church alliances. Its international office is located in Singapore.

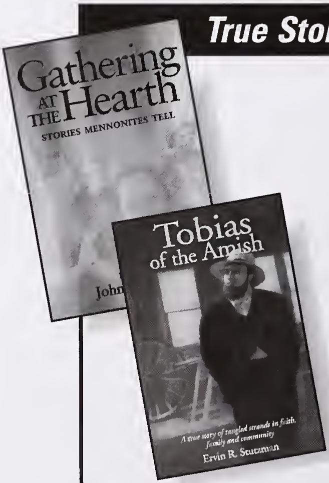
Among the topics covered by the assembly's many seminars and workshops were women's concerns, ecclesiology, holistic ministry, globalization, leadership development, media strategies and youth ministries.

One of the seminars attended by Krisetya included a presentation by Catherine Clark Kroeger, a U.S. Brethren in Christ member who serves on WEF's Commission on Women's Concerns. The commission is chaired by Winnie Bartel, a Mennonite Brethren from California.—*MWC News Service*

EMM photo by Wayne Gehman

A sound project

Justin Mitchell, a recording engineer at Mennonite Media, adjusts the microphone for Joash Osiro to record a series of Bible studies in Swahili at Mennonite Media's studio in Harrisonburg, Va. Osiro, from Nairobi, Kenya, is director of the People of God Bible study series, which was started by Eastern Mennonite Missions. EMM serves as distributor of POG materials. The Bible studies are designed for use in regions where people have no knowledge of the Bible.



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After year delay, Venezuelans get MCC relief buckets

AKRON, Pa—After a year in limbo, 11,000 Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) relief buckets are now being distributed in Venezuela.

North American MCC supporters had assembled the buckets—filled with soap, towels, toothbrushes and other supplies—for Venezuelans affected by December 1999 mudslides. The buckets arrived in Venezuela by May 2000. But due to a host of problems, the buckets were held until last month.

The mudslides had damaged Venezuela's major port, so ships were diverted to a smaller port that was inadequate to handle the traffic. Hundreds of shipping containers, including MCC's, piled up. Venezuela had not had a major national disaster in 20 years, so port authorities and customs agents had little experience dealing with imported relief materials. Further delays occurred as the local government went through seven separate elections over the past two years. Due to the slow process, the containers had to be moved from the wharf into warehouses, which began charging storage fees.

The Venezuelan government eventually confiscated MCC's six shipping containers and some 400 others, declaring them abandoned. On May 24, officials turned the containers over to MCC's partner organization, the Evangelical Council of Venezuela. Volunteers gathered to unload the buckets the same day.

The buckets are being distributed to families affected by the mudslides as originally planned. The buckets contain nonperishable items, so nothing spoiled.

Venezuelan Anabaptists earlier distributed 600 relief backets.—*MCC News Service*

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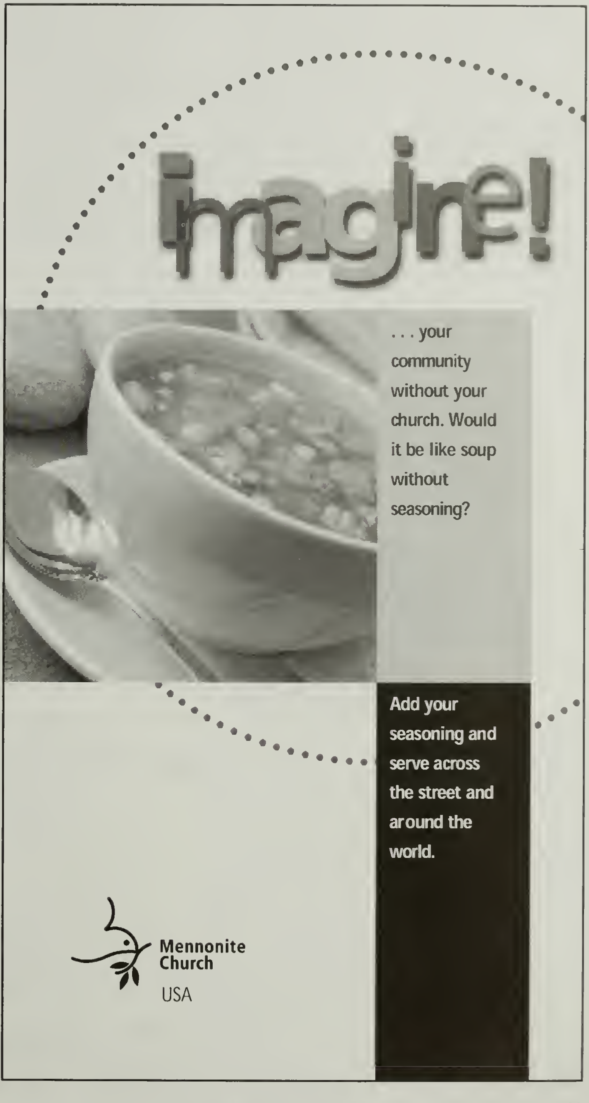

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Mennonite Church USA

Track and field athletes place at national meets

Laura Rosenberger has continued her championship reign. The pole vaulter from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., won the event at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III outdoor track and field championships May 24-26 in Decatur, Ill.

Rosenberger has won every national pole vault title—two indoor and two outdoor—since the NCAA introduced the event for women.

Meanwhile, three students from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and two from Goshen (Ind.) College placed at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics track and field championships May 24-26 in Abbotsord, B.C. For Bethel, Kendra Doyle finished fourth in the women's 400-meter low hurdles, Doug DeGroot was fifth in men's 400-meter intermediate hurdles, and Jason Gallagher was fourth in the discus. Goshen's Heidi Saunders was third in the 3,000 meters, and Ann Christenson was sixth in the shot put.

Bethel professor to be Bluffton administrator

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Jim Harder, a business and economics professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., since 1990, will be moving to sister school Bluffton College as special assistant to the president and director of institutional planning, effective Sept. 1. He will also teach part-time. Harder will work with president Lee Snyder in strategic planning, collegewide initiatives and overseeing special projects and select programs.

In addition to teaching at Bethel, Harder has served as a consultant for Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Economic Development Associates. He holds master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind. Harder is also a member of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board and its executive committee.

Harder's wife, Karen, will join the Bluffton economics and business administration faculty. She had also taught at Bethel.

MMA names recipient of new stewardship award

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid counselor Carey Gossen of Corn, Okla., has received MMA's first President's Stewardship Award. He was presented the award at MMA's annual service conference in April.

The honor recognizes a person who exemplifies holistic stewardship in his or her vocation as well as in family, church and other aspects of daily life. Gossen is a member of Corn Mennonite Brethren Church.—*MMA News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

June 19, 1900—The cornerstone is laid for the building of Central Mennonite College, now Bluffton (Ohio) College.

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2001 TOURS
ALASKA (August 1-13)
RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 3-18)
GERMANY (September 27 - October 10)
From PENNSYLVANIA to ONTARIO: Trail of the Conestoga (October 24-29)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL (October 26 - November 8)

2002 TOURS
SERVICE TOUR in SUNNY JAMAICA (January 25 - February 3)
AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 8-28)
HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
JORDAN, ISRAEL, VIENNA and BUDAPEST (February 15-28)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL/PALESTINE (April 5-18)
PARAGUAY, BOLIVIA and PERU (April 6-22)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA and Its FJORDS (June 17 - July 1)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 19 - July 1)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 12-29)
MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)
EASTERN CANADA (August 2-12)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (August 12-26)
SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)
VIETNAM (November 8-25)

2003 TOURS
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE in AFRICA (August)

Events

56th annual Eastern Civilian Public Service reunion, Aug. 9 at Chambersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church. For information, contact Irvin E. Cordell, 57 E. Grandview Ave., Mercersburg, PA 17236; 717-328-2746.

Births

Alderfer, Mark Benjamin, May 24, to Dawn (Regener) and P. Troy Alderfer, Oley, Pa.
Coates, Savannah Hope, May 16, to Bambi (Mitchell) and Kevin Coates, Ulysses, Pa.
Cross, McKinley Nikole, May 31, to Michelle (Lawson) and Monte Cross, Buhler, Kan.
Johnson, Grant McCoy, May 18, to Nita Gerig and Tim Johnson, New Carlisle, Ind.
Landis, Abigail Shelly, May 21, to Lynn (LaLonde) and Rodney S. Landis, Ottawa.
Rush, Kaleb Thomas, May 15, to Keith and Krista (Keim) Rush, Hatfield, Pa.
Stowell, Karley Mae, April 17, to Jana (Oesch) and Michael Stowell, Nampa, Idaho.

Marriages

Beachy/Lapp: Verlyn Beachy, Mifflinburg, Pa., and Treva Lapp, Gap, Pa., May 19.
Bontrager/Yoder: Beth Bontrager, Harrisonburg, Va., and Bradley Yoder, Harrisonburg, June 2 at Harrisonburg.
Bowers/Turner: Jeremy Bowers, North Royalton, Ohio, and Tara Turner, Hartville, Ohio, May 26 at Hartville Mennonite Church.
Felix/Hall: Celina Felix, Hutchinson, Kan., and Kevin Hall, Hutchinson, June 2 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.
Friesen/Tessman: Jessica Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Chad Tessman, Stockham, Neb., June 2 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Haggerty/Tessman: Lisa Haggerty, Spalding, Neb., and Corbin Tessman, Stockham, Neb., May 19 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.
Kauffman/Robinson: Shirley Kauffman, Elkhart, Ind., and Michael Robinson, Elkhart, May 12 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.
Lehman/Rhodes: Laura Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va., and Jason Rhodes, Hinton, Va., May 26 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Leinbach/Unruh: Keith Leinbach, Goshen, Ind., and Vi Unruh, Haven, Kan., May 26 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Histand, Maggie, 94, Quakertown, Pa., died May 19 of congestive heart failure. Parents: A. O. and Emma Histand (deceased). Funeral: May 23 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.
Kreider, Leonard C., 91, Goshen, Ind., died May 12 of a stroke. Spouse: Rachel Weaver Kreider. Parents: Lloyd and Adelia Stover Kreider (deceased). Other survivors: children Emil, Anna Juhnke; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: May 15 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Madden, Vina E., 78, Rutland, Vt., died May 16. Parents: Hugh and Lydia Fairbanks Madden (deceased). Funeral: May 19 at Heselton Cemetery, Bridgewater, Vt.
Moyer, Lloyd Y., 79, Sellersville, Pa., died April 6. Spouse: Alice Meyers Moyer. Parents: Howard H. and Mayers D. Yoder Moyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Judith, Jennifer, Daniel, Bradley, Stephen; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 11 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Oberly, Betty Moffitt, 77, Bluffton, Ohio, died April 30. Spouse: James Oberly. Parents: Harry and Ethel Moffitt (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice McIntosh, Mark, Jean Clum, Debby Konopka; 13 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
Troyer, Marc, 47, Bluffton, Ohio, died May 11. Spouse: (1st) Nancy Hoover Troyer; (2nd) Jane Kingsley Steinmetz Troyer. Parents: Frederick and Edith Troyer. Other survivors: children Michael, Benjamin, Joel Steinmetz, Leah Steinmetz Richardson, Matt Steinmetz, Jennifer Steinmetz. Funeral: May 14 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
Urich, Joseph L. Jr., 62, Bluffton, Ohio, died April 24. Spouse: Carolyn Sauder Urich. Parents: Joseph and Iris Littler Urich (deceased). Other survivors: children David, Jennifer; one grandchild. Funeral: April 28 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

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<www.themennonite.org>.

classifieds

- **Adoption:** We are a thoughtful, hard-working couple excited about sharing our hearts, kisses and fun family traditions with a healthy newborn. Legal/confidential.

  Please call Christina & Patrick toll-free at 1-888-526-9444.

- **Current opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has the following openings for service: educators in ***Djibouti*** in English, peace studies and computers; university teachers for ***Somaliland***; community and church development workers in ***Cambodia***; TESOL teachers in ***Asia and Africa***; teachers for Christian school in ***Thailand, Indonesia, Kenya and Honduras***.

  If interested, contact Mark Emerson at 717-898-2251; email <MarkE@emm.org>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for ***elementary and middle school positions***. A bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

  Send a letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Mount Pleasant Christian School,** a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.

  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **Ten Thousand Villages,** a fair-trade, nonprofit organization working with artisans in developing countries, is currently recruiting for a part-time ***buyer*** working with artisan groups in Southeast Asia. Applicants must have knowledge of market trends in North America as well as an understanding and appreciation for the needs of the artisans. Ability to travel several weeks a year and work out of our Akron, Pa., office are required.

  To inquire, please email Sherrie Ober at <smo@villages-mcc.org>, or fax resume to 717-859-2622.

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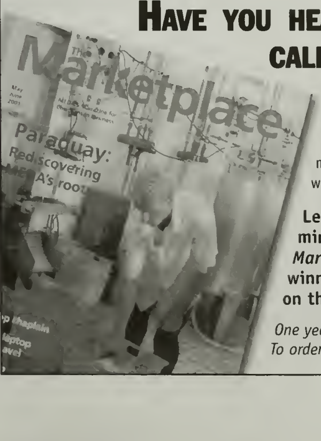

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classifieds

- **Are you, or someone you know, a manager**, administrator or leader with two or more years of experiencing living and working overseas? If so, Mennonite Central Committee invites you or your colleague to apply for one of the numerous MCC leadership openings. This year MCC needs leaders for ***El Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, south Florida, Colombia, Vietnam, Laos and Egypt***. Leadership openings in 2002 include, among others, ***Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Philippines and Bolivia***.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***chief operating officer/office and business manager***. Expectations and qualifications: (1) committed Christian with vision for discipling urban youth; (2) excellent management skills; (3) good communication skills; (4) training/experience in financial record-keeping, accounting; (5) experience or willingness to learn fund-raising skills. Responsibilities: prepare and monitor budget; implement development; organize and oversee office records and information systems; implement student process; reports directly to the Board; salary to be negotiated.

  Interested people should contact Polly Ann Brown, Board Member, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.

- **Virginia Mennonite Conference** is seeking a person to serve as ***conference coordinator***. This individual will be responsible for the administrative functions of VMC offices and provide leadership in fund raising. Administrative and supervision experience and awareness of the Mennonite Church required. Will function as a peer of the conference minister in providing visionary leadership for a conference of 80 congregations organized in 11 districts, scattered over 6 states and the District of Columbia.

  Contact Ken Weaver (540-833-1449) or Lois Maust (540-434-9727) for an application and position description. Applications with resumes accepted through July 31.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***associate director of alumni and parent relations*** to begin July 1, 2001. Assist planning and implementing successful alumni and parent relations programs, including annual Alumni and Parents Weekend; acknowledge financial contributions; support volunteer boards and committees; prepare material for Goshen College *Bulletin*; supervise office staff. B.A., excellent relational and communication skills, travel and irregular schedule, organizational ability and computer skills required. Related experience preferred. Must be enthusiastic advocate for the college.

  Send letter of application and resume, and three letters of reference, to David Janzen, Director of Human Resources, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060; email <davidpj@goshen.edu>. Complete personnel information form at <www.goshen.edu> under employment. Application deadline is June 22 or until position is filled. Women and members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an AA/EEO employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Kelowna, B.C., is searching for a ***pastor***. We are a relatively small congregation with less than 100 members and adherents. Our facility has ample space to accommodate new growth. While many of our members are retired from full-time employment, we are interested in reaching out to the community and meeting the needs of younger families. Our Sunday morning services use a traditional style of worship that is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist faith. We actively support the programs of MCC and the Mennonite church conferences.

  Potential pastoral candidates who are interested in learning more about us may contact Jake Thiessen, 10418 Tyndal Road, Lake Country, BC V4V 2K7; 250-766-1938; <jthiessen@umagroup.com>.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***associate director of development***. The associate director cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the Annual Fund goal and manages development office efforts in assigned region. Qualifications: integrity, responsibility, people skills, ability to work independently, excellent verbal and written communication skills and commitment to Hesston College, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Available July 1.

  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; email <elamp@hesston.edu> with questions. Hesston College is an equal opportunity employer.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a Mennonite-affiliated retirement community, seeks a visionary ***CEO*** with strong financial acumen and operational experience to lead its new and rapidly growing campus in southeast Pennsylvania. Located at New Holland in historic Lancaster County, GSV provides independent living and assisted living services to over 500 residents. Construction is under way to add health-care beds, dementia programming and a community center. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive retirement community experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <KirkStiffney@aol.com>.

- **Goshen College communication department** seeks a faculty member to provide leadership and teach courses in ***electronic media production and writing for electonic media***, with the possibility of teaching additional courses as appropriate to the department's needs. Non-tenure track, part-time to full-time for up to three years. Master's degree in communication, journalism or broadcasting required, doctorate or A.B.D. desirable. Experience in broadcast journalism required, teaching experience strongly preferred. Interviews will begin after June 10 and continue until the position is filled. Faculty responsibilities begin Aug. 13, 2001.

  To apply, send letter of application and curriculum vitae listing three references to Paul A. Keim, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site <www.goshen.edu>. Women and members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth. Western offers grades 6-12 and is located on 45 beautiful acres in the Pacific Northwest. Western excels in college preparation, a Christ-centered approach, music, athletics, drama and hands-on educational experiences.

  Assistant principal: Significant leadership position for an educator with interest and passion for curriculum development and supervision of instruction; includes some teaching duties. Administrative experience and qualifications desired. Full-time.

  English instructor: Teaching freshman, sophomore and senior levels of English. One year, full-time.

  Health and P.E. instructor: Teaching middle school and high school levels; coaching interest and experience also required. Part- or full-time.

  Keyboarding and intro computer instructor: Teaching and supervising computer lab. Part- or full-time.

  Kitchen assistant: Afternoon-evening shift. Part-time.

  Coaches: Head girls' soccer, JV boys' soccer.

  Contact Eric Martin, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Bound for Nashville 2001?

You are invited to a 9:30 p.m. Monday evening gathering to learn more about *The Mennonite*, the publication for Mennonite Church USA, and to commission Editor Everett J. Thomas for his role. Come for an opportunity to hear from and talk with staff and board of *The Mennonite*. Learn how the magazine can help nurture you and your congregation and serve as a tool to keep you in touch with the broader church.

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by Gordon Houser

To illustrate her point about the power of media to reshape social norms, Beth Zeilinger tells the story of a literacy campaign in Mexico a few years back.

Few people showed up at the neighborhood literacy meetings. Then a TV producer got involved. A popular soap opera wove the literacy campaign into its story line, and its star spoke out in an ad campaign for literacy. Attendance at literacy meetings increased 800 percent.

Unfortunately, media's influence is not always so positive. Zeilinger, who works for the National Institute on Media and the Family (NIMF), spoke at a workshop and a luncheon at the Associated Church Press annual convention in April in Minneapolis.

Media affect social norms, and society affects individuals. Today's media exert a huge influence on society and on families, she said. Children spend an average of three hours per week with parents but more than 30 hours per week with media, mainly television and video games.

Zeilinger listed these contrasting values between what much of today's media present and what many parents hold:

- violence is funny vs. violence is tragic;
- instant gratification vs. perseverance;
- anything for money vs. justice, fairness;
- "in your face" vs. respect, cooperation;
- me first vs. responsibility.

The main goal of television, she said, is advertising, which is the art and science of values education. David Walsh, founder of NIMF, says, "The most effective influence is when the person being influenced doesn't know it."

Zeilinger pointed to another factor in the effect of the media, the brain. Emotion, she said, is a function of brain development; it focuses our attention, aids our memory and motivates our behavior. Advertisers know this. They talk about the "jps factor" (jolts per show).

Television and video games are geared more toward jolts than toward reflection or clear thinking.

These jolts often come from violent images. "The most pervasive impact of the steady diet of violent images," says Walsh, "is that it has created and nourished a culture of disrespect."

Ask any elementary school teacher about the increase of disrespect among children toward each other and toward adults. Media influence plays a role in this.

We all need to become more media wise, understand how media affect us and promote good uses for it. Did you know that the number one show watched by 3-year-olds last year was *Friends*? Have you heard of the video game *Duke Nukem*, which shows images I cannot describe in a family magazine? Less than 10 percent of adults have heard of it, but more than 80 percent of teens have.

You may want to visit NIMF's web site, <www.mediaandthefamily.org>. You'll find many resources listed, plus ways to address this growing problem.

We cannot—and do not wish to—eliminate media. But we must attend to their influence.

From our readers: *Choosing Mercy: A Mother of Murder Victims Pleads to End the Death Penalty* by Antoinette Bosco (Orbis Books, 2001, $17) is the only anti-death penalty book I know of that has received the personal, written endorsement of a Catholic cardinal (Francis Cardinal George). You might want to wear gloves to read it; it has some searing parts. It has some complimentary Mennonite references as well.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

books

Two books on contemplative living offer different, though compatible, approaches. *The Contemplative Heart* by James Finley (Sorin Books, 2000, $13.95) is written to be read slowly, contemplatively. Finley defines contemplation as "that kind of intimate, intuitive experience in which the grace of life is realized." After describing his contemplative vision of life, he calls on readers to (1) find their contemplative practice and practice it, (2) find their contemplative community and enter it and (3) find their contemplative teaching and follow it. He is a painstaking, thorough guide to seeking "the inherent holiness of the present moment."

Organic Spirituality: A Sixfold Path for Contemplative Living by Nicki Verploegen Vandergrift (Orbis Books, 2000, $13) is lighter reading but carries a similar call. Vandergrift uses stories (though not enough) and offers practical advice (though not enough) about six disciplines: slowing down, sharing our stories, stillness, solitude, surrender and solidarity. We need to experience the sacred through our senses, she writes, which "become 'an integral element' in the shaping of our foundational selves, contributing to our spiritual identity and our sense of place in the world."

If we even tried to follow the counsel of these two books, we would experience God's grace more deeply and our world would change for the better.

films

Memento (R for language and some violence) is intriguing. Leonard Shelby (Guy Pearce) suffers short-term memory loss. He writes notes and takes Polaroids of people he meets to try to make sense. In a story told backward, he looks for the man who murdered his wife. The film raises questions about memory's unreliability, how we use it to create an identity and how others use it against people for their own purposes.

videos

Requiem for a Dream (R for drug use, language) is a cautionary tale about the enslavement of drug use. Sara Goldfarb (Ellen Burstyn) gets a call to appear on her favorite TV show. In the desire to lose weight to fit into the dress she wore to her son's graduation, this lonely widow gets hooked on diet pills. Her son Harry, his girlfriend and his partner in the drug trade join the spiral of personal destruction. Like Darren Aronofsky's first film, π, this one probes people's desperate search for meaning.

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Gordon Houser

The blessing of high gas prices

You can find sympathy with most people you meet by complaining about the high gas prices. But since burning gasoline causes environmental problems, we could see these as a blessing, a wake-up call to change our ways.

When we think about environmental issues such as global warming, the destruction of rain forests or the extinction of species, we may feel overwhelmed. But there are relatively small steps we all can take to care for the creation God called "very good" (Genesis 1:31). (See box below.)

The basic step is to oppose the spirit of our age that wants to consume, possess and hoard what God has made.

Our government leaders exemplify this spirit. In May, White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said: "The President believes that … it should be the goal of policymakers to protect the American way of life. The American way of life is a blessed one."

We can say no. Jesus does not call us to protect the American way of life, especially when that way contributes to the detriment of life on our planet. Habits of consumption are hard to change, but the consequences of those habits are dire.

In January, after five years of exhaustive scientific study, the International Panel on Climate Change announced that if we keep burning fossil fuels at anything like our current rate, the planet will warm four or five degrees, perhaps as much as 11 degrees, before the century is out.

The last decade was the warmest on record in human history. Arctic ice has thinned 40 percent in the last 40 years. Sea levels are steadily rising .

This global warming is affected mainly by carbon dioxide emissions, and 20 percent of those emissions in the United States come from automobiles. While automakers produce more gas-efficient cars, more and more Americans buy sport utility vehicles (SUVs), which is a big reason why Americans produce 12 percent more CO_2 than 10 years ago.

Why single out SUVs? They are a luxury we can easily live without. They are expensive, not proven safer than other cars, people in snowy areas get by fine without them, and nine in 10 never leave the pavement. As Bill McKibben writes in "Driving Global Warming" (*The Christian Century*, May 16), "The only reason we have them now is that the car companies make immense profits from them."

But the big problem is that they are mostly a machine for burning gasoline. If you switch from a normal car and drive an SUV for one year, writes McKibben, "the extra energy you use would be the equivalent of leaving the door to the fridge open for six years."

This is why high gas prices can be a blessing. Perhaps those who do not want to listen to "tree huggers" will pay attention to their pocketbooks and buy a more energy-efficient vehicle. My neighbor, who is not out to make any political statement, did just that, buying a small car that gets 45 miles to the gallon.

Not buying an SUV may seem a small step to some, but it can make a huge difference. And perhaps the rest of us can use the higher gas prices as an impetus to walk or bike more.

Our car-driving habits are deeply ingrained, but we can change. If we care for God's good creation, we must change.

We look back 150 years and wonder how Christians could accept slavery. Will future generations, drowning in sea water, look back at us and wonder how we could have pursued our destructive habits?—*gh*

10 ways to reduce global warming
(and the amount of carbon dioxide saved)

10. Plant two trees: 20 pounds/year
9. Use a push mower instead of a power mower: 80 pounds/year
8. Replace old, inefficient refrigerator with high-efficiency model: 220 pounds/year
7. Buy products with reusable or recyclable packaging instead of those packaged in non recyclable materials: 230 pounds/year
6. Replace old washing machine with a more efficient model: 440 pounds/year
5. Install a solar hot-water system in home: 720 pounds/year
4. Recycle all newspapers, cardboard, glass and metal: 850 pounds/year
3. Walk, bike or take public transportation to work two days a week: 1,590 pounds/year
2. Insulate home, tune up furnace and install energy-efficient showerheads: 2,480 pounds/year
1. Replace old car with a fuel-efficient vehicle (32 miles per gallon or more): 5,600 pounds/year

—*from* National Wildlife *(June-July)*

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the Mennonite

June 26, 2001

A candlelight vigil at Communion Fellowship, a missional church in Goshen, Ind., that receives many visitors weekly.

transformed by the Spirit

page 4

6 Nine point six one
10 MPH cuts directory, bookstore, curriculum
11 Networks bathe the church in prayer
20 Leadership from a congregational view

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

College choices

I just finished reading "Help Our Youth Choose Their Colleges" (June 12) and found it to be nearsighted. While I believe that parents should help children choose their college, I do not believe that they should present the perfect choice to always be a church college or, more specifically, a Mennonite college.

I was raised in the Mennonite church and went to public school. I turned down the chance to go to the local Mennonite high school in spite of the fact that my boyfriend went there. Going to a public school helped me defend my faith and influence others for Christ instead of being sheltered in a Mennonite school. When it came time to choose a college, I chose Taylor University, Upland, Ind., because it was friendly and had what I wanted academically. One student out of the 12 to 15 from our church chose a Mennonite college. The others chose other Christian colleges and a few non-Christian colleges. They are still active in the Mennonite church.

I believe that how one is raised and whether or not one is a Christian have significantly more influence on one's church activity than which college one attends. The Mennonite colleges are not the answer for everyone, and we shouldn't present them as such. Which college to attend (if to attend at all) is an important decision to be left ultimately to the student. I ended up marrying a Christian who was not Mennonite, and we attended several other denominations before joining Toledo (Ohio) Mennonite Church. Does all this make me less of a Mennonite? Maybe. But I don't think I'm any less of a Christian; in fact, I think I'm stronger because of it.—*Marla Folkerts, Holland, Ohio*

Speak up for unborn

"Monumental Convention in a Monumental Place" (June 5) mentions that Christian Peacemaker Teams plans a witness against the death penalty for convicted criminals. It would be befitting for CPT to protest as well the death penalty imposed on the thousands never given the benefit of a trial. Violently murdered, dismembered or discarded, unborn infants are, without doubt, innocent. They need a witness. Proverbs 6:16-17 states there are six things the Lord hates, including "hands that shed innocent blood." Proverbs 31:8 commands, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves."

We must be the prophetic voice speaking loudly, not only for the lives of condemned criminals but also for the innocent unborn. God warns us in Proverbs 24:10-12 that he will hold us accountable if we ignore this killing and say we knew nothing about this. I pray that my church, which promotes peace and nonviolence, will be a leader in protesting the violence of abortion, which is destroying the very fabric of our families, our society and our churches.—*David Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

Who was first?

Whoops! Sorry, Felix Manz was not the first Anabaptist martyr (Editorial, "Death Takes a Holiday," May 22). That dubious distinction goes to Eberli Bolt, burned at the stake in the Swiss canton of Schwyz in May 1525, almost two years before Manz's drowning in Zurich.

I would add to the editorial's list of those who died for their faith our Anabaptist sisters and brothers in Congo, Indonesia and Central America.—*Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon*

Editor's note: According to historian C.J. Dyck and other authorities, Bolt was the first Anabaptist to be martyred, but he was killed by Catholic authorities for being a Protestant, not for being an Anabaptist. He is considered the first Protestant martyr. Manz was killed by Protestants for being an Anabaptist and is considered the first Anabaptist martyr.

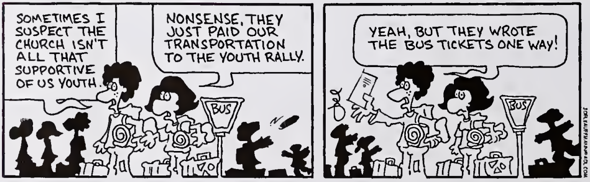
The magazine's influence

On June 3 at Rochester (N.Y.) Area Mennonite Fellowship, we baptized a new member, who became interested in Mennonites from reading back issues of *The Mennonite* while baby-sitting for one of the families in our congregation. I'm not sure whether this happens a lot but thought you'd want to know. Our last baptisms were about seven years ago, so we were feeling celebratory.—*Kathy Kern, Rochester N.Y.*

The heart of the matter

Thanks for the story on Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church ("Taking the Gospel Across the Street in Southern California," May 15).

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


SOMETIMES I SUSPECT THE CHURCH ISN'T ALL THAT SUPPORTIVE OF US YOUTH.
NONSENSE. THEY JUST PAID OUR TRANSPORTATION TO THE YOUTH RALLY.
BUS
YEAH, BUT THEY WROTE THE BUS TICKETS ONE WAY!
BUS

the**Mennonite**

Vol. 4, No. 24, June 26, 2001

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

Please give us more of these stories. This is a type of missional congregation that inspires us all. Many congregations are notable centers of God's mission. I believe that congregations becoming centers of God's mission is rightly at the heart of the creation of Mennonite Church USA. If in our congregations we put membership issues at the heart of what we are about, we'll destroy ourselves and we'll deserve what we get. May the spirit of Psalm 67 become a vital expression of who we are as God's people. *—Raymond Martin, Newport News, Va.*

Book report

On a recent visit to Scottdale, Pa., I was reminded again of the important work being done there through the Books Abroad program. It started in 1961 through the vision of Elizabeth Showalter, an editor and writer who saw the need for books in Africa when she visited there on a teaching mission. She realized that here we have so many books that we often don't know where to go with them. She arranged to collect books and send them to seminaries and church leaders in Africa.

The program began in a small way but has grown to include other communities and many countries around the world. Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale furnishes space for storing books and has contributed hundreds of books and leftover Christian education materials as well. Milford and Winifred Erb Paul work on a voluntary basis to organize the books and match them with needs abroad. Recently James Horsch, editor of *Purpose,* donated his rather substantial library when he moved out of the Scottdale community. The program operates on a minimal budget, but it needs money to pay for postage to get the books to those who need them.*—Dorothy Cutrell, DeLand, Fla.*

**Cover photo
by Ryan Miller**

Transformed by the Spirit

Missional churches go beyond themselves and align themselves with God's purposes.

by Stanley W. Green

Every Sunday, all across North America, church leaders and laypeople ask two critical questions: What can we do to experience a fresh sense of vitality and new life in our congregation? What do we need to do to actually fulfill God's purposes for our existence?

Leaders of Mennonite Church USA are asking the same kinds of questions. They have expressed a commitment to become a "missional church." But what does that mean?

The primary reason for creating a new Mennonite Church is to fulfill the vision for every congregation and all parts of the church to be fully engaged in God's mission, reaching across the street and around the world. The Holy Spirit calls Mennonites beyond ourselves—to be a church that exists for others.

The best way to imagine what it means to be a missional church is to look closely at the life of a congregation that has answered God's call, followed Jesus and experienced the power of the Spirit. When a congregation grows as a community of grace, joy and peace, God's healing and hope flow through each member of the congregation to the world—whether that means the people next door or a people half a world away.

Season of prayer: At Communion Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation in Goshen, Ind., something happened in the mid-1990s that helped them begin to understand the implications of such a transformation. After asking questions for some time, this congregation of about 120 members in northern Indiana began a season of prayer and discernment about God's purpose for their congregation.

"Undergirding everything we do is a belief that God speaks," says Charles Buller, lead elder of the congregation. "We need to place a high priority on how God is calling us."

When Communion Fellowship began this journey, they were not looking for another program. Their quest was not for a new methodology or an innovative technique for stimulating new life in the congregation. They wanted to be what God wanted them to be.

The vision of a missional church is not about reaching for a new fad that would somehow breathe fresh life into tired congregational routine. It is not about designing a new program or a new strategy that would enable a congregation to meet defined goals. The commitment to a missional church is about being open to change and transformation. It is about creating a climate that anticipates the transforming work of the Spirit of God.

A missional church is ... open to change and transformation. It is about creating a climate that anticipates the transforming work of the Spirit of God.

Primary identity: A missional congregation, as Communion Fellowship learned, is one that invites and welcomes the power of the Spirit to transform its life. Missional congregations are sensitive to and shaped by God's intent to restore the whole creation, uniting all things in Christ. A transformed faith community moves from mission being simply another important facet of the congregation's inventory of programs to the place where mission is the primary identity, the central focus, the organizing principle.

In such a congregation, mission is not just another program. Mission becomes the constitutive reality that permeates every aspect of the congregation's life and witness. Every program, activity and initiative has a missional intention. By nature a missional congregation tests each program, activity and initiative against its commitment to align itself with God's purposes in the world. Such congregations ask whether their work reconciles a broken, alienated creation to God.

As mission consultant Craig van Gelder has put it: "Worship must always seek to welcome the stranger. Discipleship must always lead to training people to be disciple-makers. Fellowship must always seek to enfold those on the margins or the newcomer. Service must always be in the name of Jesus, with a view toward grace and redemption. Witness must lead to calling people into relationship with the living God."

A number of unexpected things happened at Communion Fellowship as they began this journey in faith. God laid on their hearts the Wolof people from West Africa. Then God gave them courage to risk making a commitment to send a number of families to love and live among this Muslim people in the name of Jesus. Could they do it? Did they have the resources? Perhaps not—at least not from what was immediately apparent. But they wanted what they believed God wanted for them, and they were willing to take bold risks, trusting in God's leading.

Lunch breaks: An elder in the congregation and his spouse bought a business, employing a number of young men from the congregation. They called it Mission Woodworking (see *The Mennonite*, Jan. 16). Earlier this year, I delivered a receipt for $35,000, which represented their contributions to the West African effort

Ryan Miller

Vision as resource: Lou Mierau (arms outstretched), Bryan Mierau and Mary Armington worship at Communion Fellowship.

from a portion of the business's profits. And that's not all. Mission Woodworking continues to provide lunch breaks for staff to learn about the work of the team and the challenges they face.

Vision as currency: Others in the congregation bought two houses badly in need of renovation and refurbished them. They realized a $30,000 gain, which was also contributed to the work in West Africa. The leadership of the congregation visited Mennonite Board of Missions offices, where they shared their vision and explored a partnership. With vision as their primary currency, Communion Fellowship sought partnerships with others who shared a similar vision, and they released energy within the congregation that was aligned with the vision being discerned and broadly communicated through the practices and preaching in the congregation.

Today, a number of families from the congregation are in West Africa—not just average participants but some of Communion Fellowship's key leaders. The congregation regularly organizes banquets and prayer concerts to share information about the work and to expand the vision to other congregations.

As Communion Fellowship reached around the world, the congregation also extended its ministry to people across the street. Worship became more welcoming and inclusive. The congregation found ways to create an inviting, open fellowship. "We are not perfect," says Charles. However, the congregation has begun a journey toward becoming more aligned with God's purposes in the world.

As with Communion Fellowship, when a congregation is transformed into a missional community, the focus shifts. The congregation's primary resource is no longer finances or people. The congregation learns that vision is the principal resource. This shift moves congregations away from focusing on their limits or opportunities to merely be faithful to God's call.

This does not mean people are not important. The changing focus, however, means that mission is not solely the preserve of a committee delegated to manage this task on behalf of a passive congregation. Neither is mission the preserve of certain heroic individuals, whose commitment is admired and applauded. In a missional congregation, mission is not the preoccupation of a cadre of trained professionals but the vocation of an equipped, empowered laity. Everyone gets involved. Each person's gift is welcomed and mobilized to support the congregation's journey toward alignment with God's purpose. The climate in the congregation is one in which every member is being shaped by a missional consciousness. Each person's spirituality is nurtured by missional practices and commitments.

Set apart: When congregations are transformed in this way, they no longer can be comfortable accommodating our culture's customs. Missional congregations embrace the fact that they are set apart from the culture just as they are passionately committed to and concerned for its transformation by the Spirit of Christ. This commitment shapes a prophetic and life-giving witness by the congregation. To uncritically adopt cultural norms and values is ultimately impoverishing. It may represent a mere faddish quest after relevance. Allowing ourselves to be transformed by the Spirit of God holds the promise of new vitality and life.

Stanley W. Green, a member of Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., in March was named executive director of the new Mennonite Church USA mission agency.

Missional congregations … are set apart from the culture just as they are passionately committed to and concerned for its transformation by the Spirit of Christ.

Nine point six one

by Megan Yoder

Charity enters the unfamiliar room. She looks from one side to the other and sees many like herself. They are all in this whirlwind of life together now, poor and homeless as always. Charity tries to smile, but somehow the child she balances in one arm and the cigarette she grips with her other hand tell a truer story. She is 29 years old, but she cannot hide the deeply etched wrinkles on her forehead or the look of worry in her eyes.

In a town like Goshen, Ind., where the job market booms, spirits are high and Midwest hospitality flourishes, homelessness is seldom thought to be an issue. But every day last year in the Goshen area, 9.61 people on average, including many small children, found themselves without homes, many of them without jobs and without anyone in whom they could confide.

Home has become a relative term to Charity, a single mother who finds her name included in this list of statistics. Divorced from her husband, who currently lives in Chicago with another woman, Charity struggles to provide for herself and her 6-month-old daughter, Brittany. Money for food and clothes becomes scarce while Charity waits for her welfare check or, if she is lucky, a personal check of $15 from her ex-husband.

Every day last year in the Goshen area, 9.61 people on average, including many small children, found themselves without homes, many of them without jobs and without anyone in whom they could confide.

Although many cities the size of Goshen (pop. 30,000) overlook their homeless population or simply refuse to admit its existence, Goshen has joined a nationwide program called the Interfaith Hospitality Network.

The national program began 11 years ago in Summit, N.J., with the mission of providing shelter care for any homeless family or individual. Eighty centers across the country now share this goal and continue to replace hopelessness with hospitality. Goshen's Interfaith Hospitality Network Day Center, where guests go during the day to find counsel and job leads, celebrated its fifth anniversary last October.

"The day center acts as a springboard for the Interfaith guests," says Tim Thorne, director of the network in Goshen. "It's a place where parents can find counseling while their kids go to school as usual. It just makes everyday life possible again for the families."

Everyday life for Charity and Brittany, who has been sick and malnourished for the better part of her life, however, is not so simple. Brittany is Charity's fourth child; two have been adopted by other families, and one died due to premature birth. Now Charity finds herself desperately trying to hold onto the life of her fourth child.

"I usually get about one or two hours of sleep a night," says Charity, declining to offer her full name. "There's just no time. I gotta take care of a sick baby, pay medical bills, learn job training, fill out applications and look for a job all at once. Plus, I don't got a car and don't have any money for a baby-sitter. … Sometimes I think I'm just gonna lose my mind."

Well-being: Although Charity claims her addictions to coffee and cigarettes are her only means of remaining sane, she does acknowledge that the Interfaith Hospitality Network has also contributed to her well-being.

"Interfaith is a good program. The people who work there are just so nice. I mean, where would I be tonight if I wasn't here?" Charity says as she changes Brittany's diaper before putting her to bed. Tonight, the Mennonite

The Interfaith Hospitality Network reaches out to homeless families.

Youth Fellowship room of College Mennonite Church is her bedroom.

Every night for the past week, Charity has been able to tuck her daughter into a real bed under soft blankets and a dry roof. The Network serves as a day program but has found a way to involve 13 local churches in helping the homeless at night. Eight Mennonite churches in the Goshen area—Berkey, Clinton Frame, College, East Goshen, Eighth Street, North Goshen, Walnut Hill and Waterford—for one week per month each, have agreed to convert their Sunday school rooms into bedrooms, their fellowship halls into living rooms, their congregational members into hosts. Each evening guests arrive in loaded vans, owned by the network, at one of the participating churches, where they chat with church volunteers and eat steamy chicken noodle soup and apple dumplings.

"I'd like to see more young families with children signing up to host the homeless families," says Kathryn Leatherman, one of the network coordinators at College Mennonite Church. "That way [the homeless guests] could learn how other families function and use what they see in rebuilding their own family situations."

Cold streets: By integrating families from different backgrounds and situations, they can learn from each other. Not only can the homeless guests learn from the hosts, but the hosts can listen and learn what it is like to walk the cold streets at midnight, to go for three days without eating and to feel utter hopelessness.

Perhaps education is the key to finding that hope, Kathryn says. Through example, teaching families certain concepts, such as health issues, conflict resolution and the importance of education, can help the new generation break the cycle their parents have been in for years. Maybe Charity's daughter Brittany would not be stunted in her growth had her caretakers learned that babies need formula to eat and not cookies, prescription medicine instead of adult Tylenol gel caps.

"This is an obligation as long as there is need," Kathryn says. "I think it's a sin not to share with people who have no homes."

Conviction like Kathryn's is not unlike the love of the Good Samaritan. Just as the Samaritan clothed the naked man, gave him shelter and provided him with food, the Interfaith Hospitality Network is dedicated to the ways of Jesus and helps Mennonites live their faith. Faith is sharing the overabundance of resources we have, Kathryn says. "With the kind of money we have invested in our churches, there is no reason we shouldn't help those who are less fortunate."

They come less fortunate, but they seem to be leaving fulfilled and encouraged, says Tim about the network guests. "Our goal is to move them through the program in 30 days or less. Some take a little longer, but most are out in five to 10 days."

For Charity, five to 10 days seems a small length of time after the months she has spent in homeless shelters. However, the network hopes to lower those numbers even more since moving this spring into a larger building closer to public transportation.

"We hope to expand the program to include more case management personnel and more individual support in general," says Tim. "The new facility won't be just a shelter."

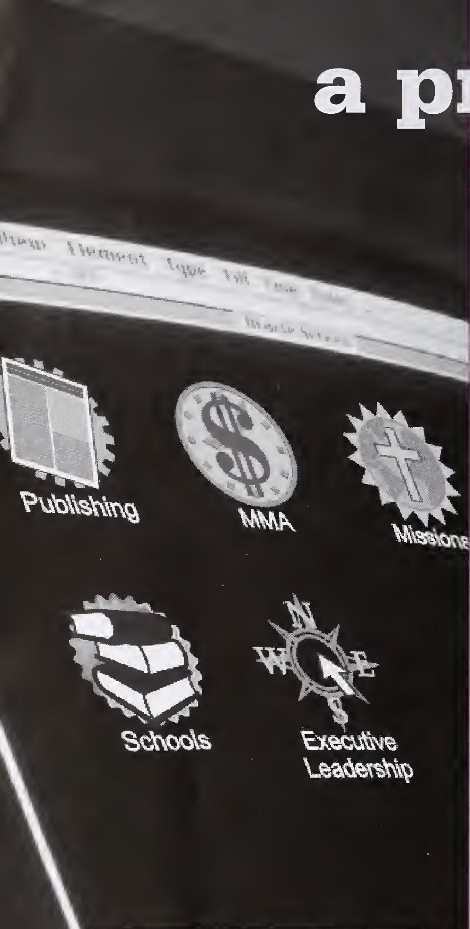
Solace: According to Charity, the network has never been "just a shelter" to her and Brittany. Interfaith has allowed her to find solace once again and given her a chance to meet others who share her hardships. Through the intertwining network of hospitality, Charity has found her voice under roofs of faith.

With the kind of money we have invested in our churches, there is no reason we shouldn't help those who are less fortunate.—*Kathryn Leatherman*

"I just want to find a place of my own, somewhere for me and Brittany to live. That's all that matters," says Charity.

But little does Charity know, the Interfaith Hospitality Network has more in store for her. A home is not all that matters in the workers' eyes. When Charity steps out of the Network's doors for the last time, they hope she will truly know the love of the community of faith. By offering of herself and her situation and by using the voice she's kept silent, Charity will receive more than she hoped for. And in the process she will have revived the love of God in the hearts of those who dared to listen.

Megan Yoder is a student at Goshen (Ind.) College.



a profile

Executive Board

Mission

To participate fully with God in setting things right in a broken world, we share with others the gift of God's love through our worship, witness and life together.

Purposes

- Provide leadership and coordination for the whole church
- Provide links that unify and advance the effectiveness of the whole of Mennonite Church USA, including the development of policies, long-range vision and goals
- Provide for essential program elements not covered by churchwide program agencies (e.g., ministerial leadership and congregational life)
- Ensure that ministries and services created are based on the core values held by all parts of the church
- Express concern for the good of all through articulating core values and developing systems of sharing resources
- Serve as the official point of reference between Mennonite Church USA and other denominations and groups

Values

- Christ-centered living and witness for the denomination, guided by core statements such as Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective
- Values expressed in key formation documents produced at the inception of the new church
- Vision- and mission-driven; results-oriented
- Unity amid diversity of gifts and callings throughout the church
- Clearly defined leadership exercised in a collaborative manner
- Networking of core values of the church, for the good of all
- Sound relationships among entities and parts of the church and among church workers
- Good stewardship of resources and efficiency in operation
- Supporting, caring for and nurturing of church leaders and workers

Executive officer

Jim Schrag

Board members

Executive Committee: Lee Snyder, moderator, Bluffton, Ohio; Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect, Harrisonburg, Va.; D. Duane Oswald, secretary, Fresno, Calif.; James M. Harder, North Newton, Kan.; Roy Williams, Land O'Lakes, Fla.

Additional members: Don Barnhill, Walnut Hill, Fla.; Cleon Claassen, Moses Lake, Wash.; R. Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.; Leslie Francisco III, Hampton, Va.; Susan Gingerich, Goshen, Ind.; Pat Hershberger, Woodburn, Ore.; Harold Miller, Corning, N.Y.; Shoua Moua, Arvada, Colo.; Ruth Naylor, Bluffton, Ohio; Jane Peiffer, Lancaster, Pa.; Lois Thieszen Preheim, Aurora, Neb.; Edwin Rempel, Littleton, Colo.; Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Norma Wiens, Newton, Kan.

Agency index

Proposed number of staff: 15 administrative, 10 clerical
Proposed budget: $2.5 million
Proposed number of regional offices: 4
Number of women on 20-member Executive Board (after Nashville): 11
Number of people of color on 20-member Executive Board (after Nashville): 6

Leadership: Executive Board member James Harder (left) and moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman

Retirement seems a long way off.

Do we need to be concerned about it now?

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Directory, book publishing, Bible school curriculum among cuts as MPH Inc. addresses financial woes

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Facing an unexpectedly large deficit, the board of the new Mennonite Publishing House Inc. has placed the future of the *Mennonite Directory* and vacation Bible school curriculum in doubt, while putting money-making stipulations on new Herald Press books and closing a Provident bookstore.

The board took the actions at its June 8-9 meeting in Scottdale after seeing audited reports for the fiscal year ending Jan. 31. They showed a combined operating deficit of $429,000 for the Mennonite Church's Mennonite Publishing House and the General Conference Mennonite Church's Faith & Life Press and Bookstores. The operations combined earlier this year to form MPH Inc.

Targeted are the biggest financial drains on the organization's budget. Bible school curriculum lost $132,000 last year, and the *Mennonite Directory* lost $87,000. The Provident Bookstore in Scottdale ended the last fiscal year $75,000 in the red, at least the fifth consecutive year it has not shown a profit.

The board ordered work to stop immediately on the directory and new Bible school curriculum. But the two projects could be saved if additional funding or "other mitigating factors that create product viability" are discovered, according to the board's action. Dennis Good, MPH Inc. executive vice president, says avenues are being explored to continue both projects.

Additionally, the board told Herald Press not to publish any new books unless they can be expected to break even within two years. Subsidies can be solicited for books projected to lose money. Herald Press released 19 books last year and lost $256,000. The board also directed that MPH Inc. administrative costs be reduced 15 percent, or $175,000.

While the total potential savings from these cuts won't be calculated for at least a month, Good expects the organization to now be able to break even. "That was our objective in this first year of combined operations," says Good, who will become acting publisher when current publisher Robert Ramer retires on July 31.

MPH Inc. is expecting to make a profit of $165,000, according to a preliminary budget for the next fiscal year.

Faith & Life, which had projected a deficit of $112,000, reported a shortfall of $59,000 for the past fiscal year, while taking in $2.1 million in income. Mennonite Publishing House, which had not had an audit for a decade, lost $370,000—$531,000 off its estimated profit of $161,000. Income was $15.6 million.

The causes of Mennonite Publishing House's deficit, say MPH Inc. officials, include higher than expected losses in Bible school curriculum and the *Mennonite Directory,* a downturn in Provident Bookstore sales, Y2K-upgrade expenses and costs of merging with Faith & Life.

Other than closing the bookstore, which has two full-time and several part-time employees, no announcement has been made about how the cuts could affect MPH Inc. jobs.

"The challenges that we are dealing with have accumulated over a long period of time," says J. Glen Hostetler, MPH Inc. board chair and chair of the old Mennonite Publication Board, which oversaw Mennonite Publishing House. "I believe the board is taking its work seriously and is grappling with the issues, which are substantial."

The *Mennonite Directory* is an annual resource book of all U.S. and Canadian denominational congregations, ministers, board members and related institutions, plus church statistics. Only 2,383 copies of the 2001 directory were sold, down more than 1,200 from two years earlier.

The *Mennonite Directory* was started in 1999, replacing the General Conference Mennonite Church *Handbook of Information* and the Mennonite Church *Mennonite Yearbook.* The General Conference Mennonite Church had regularly published a directory since 1881, while the Mennonite Church started in 1905.

Writing and editorial work has already been completed on the 2002 Bible school materials, which will be available next spring. Faith & Life and Mennonite Publishing House had been producing *The Bible: Then and Now* series since 1999, adding new curriculum every year. MPH Inc. hopes to sell 350 school boxes of the 2001 materials; 241 school boxes plus more than 16,000 student pieces were sold last year.

The Scottdale bookstore, one of 11 Provident stores, is slated to close by Aug. 18. Started in 1908 as Mennonite Bookstore, it was the first store in the Provident chain.—*Rich Preheim and Everett J. Thomas*

Tax program is boon to Arizona school

Hopi Mission School at Kykotsmovi, Ariz., received more than just a little help last year from Arizona taxpayers. Thanks to a new state tax credit that allows Arizonans to redirect as much as $500 to qualified schools for scholarship assistance, Hopi Mission School received an extra $40,000 in 2000.

Acting principal Bill Zuercher called the infusion of cash "one of the most uplifting morale boosts for us in recent years."

And it could get better. The amount that can be redirected has been raised to $625 for 2001.

Hopi Mission School will celebrate its 50th anniversary July 20-22. The school is supported by the Commission on Home Ministries and the American Baptist Churches.—*Panorama*

Seeing the path before us ...

Believing God has called us ...

“Thank you again and hope to see you all in better times.” Gratitude and anguish wrapped in a few words. This greeting from a partner caught in the warfare of the Balkans epitomizes the experience of MCC walking with a hurting world.

The **doing** part of this journey: 1,400 workers serving in some 60 countries using donated material and financial resources valued at $97 million Cdn./$63 million U.S. and thousands of local and short-term volunteers and supporters making this service possible.

This annual report offers glimpses of priorities: Emergency relief to El Salvador and India; building the capacity of partners in Manitoba and Mozambique; striving for peace and justice from South Dakota to South Africa; connecting with people from Aboriginal and Zimbabwean communities.

But the doing is preceded by **seeing**. MCC is invited into the corners of the world as well as to the edges of our home communities. We see and experience first-hand the impact of economic globalization on the poor; the human rights abuses inflicted on oppressed people; the degradation of God’s creation; the devastation of HIV/AIDS; the terror of violence and war. All these make us join the prayer of church leaders in Macedonia: “May the way of the cross and the spirit of resurrection continue to inspire and illuminate new paths of peace.”

Undergirding the doing and seeing is **believing**, a profound and compelling faith challenged by Jesus and by the story of the good Samaritan to “go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37). The biblical vision is one of reconciliation: humankind to God, people to people, and humankind to God’s creation (2 Corinthians 5:19). This reconciled community of faith is found among all nations, all peoples, using all languages (Rev. 7).

Thus **seeing**, **believing** and **doing** lead to walking with a hurting world. Thank you for joining us on this journey “in the name of Christ.”

Ronald J.R. Mathies, MCC Executive Director

MCC seeks to demonstrate God’s love by working amon
channel of interchange by building relationships that are
experiences, resources and faith in Jesus Christ.

Doing what God has asked.

Irian Jaya, Indones

people suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural disaster. MCC serves as a

mutually transformative. MCC strives for peace, justice and dignity of all people by sharing our

Immigration worker Elizabeth Gonzalez—New York

SEEING. Each year thousands of newcomers enter Canada and the United States looking for a place to call
others merely seeking a better life for themselves and their families. Newcomers must find their way in a

"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing

DOING. MCC works with newcomers throughout Canada and the United States. Efforts include newcomer centers in Alberta and Ontario, refugee assistance programs in Saskatchewan and California and the MCC U.S. Immigration Education program.

home. They come from all parts of the world—some fleeing war and persecution,
new and strange place.

BELIEVING Christ has called us to open our doors to the stranger. In doing so we recognize that we too are sojourners. By welcoming the stranger we open ourselves to gifts from God.

HEBREWS 13:2 NIV

home

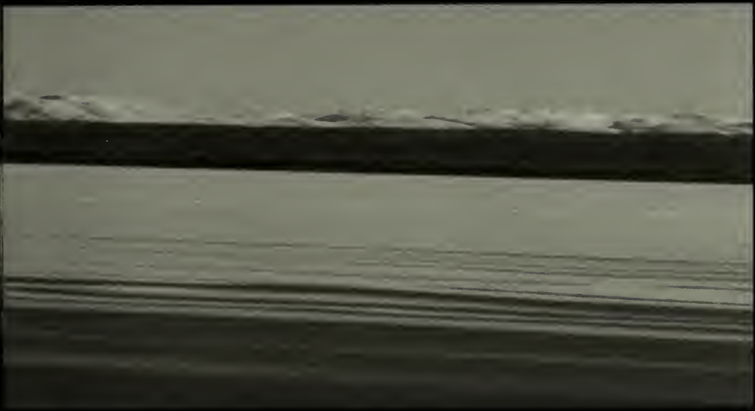
SEEING. The history of Canada and the United States is steeped in the
Native Americans. Their story and voices have been relegated to a few
to the dominant culture for justice.

Homeland of [illegible]

BELIEVING. God expects us not only to seek and to do justice, but to love justice. We are called to encourage the oppressed, lift the downtrodden, speak for those who are suffering and let justice roll down like water.

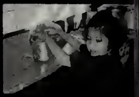
DOING. Mennonites and Brethren in Christ view their history as a blessing. In Labrador, MCC has joined with the Innu to find healing in their past. MCC's Lakota Nation service unit has helped others to understand Lakota perspectives in South Dakota. Mennonite pastors and leaders of the Cheam met together in British Columbia.

in and tragedy of First Nations people and
es in history books. Today they call out



The Lord loves righteousness and justice, the earth is filled with His unfailing love." Psalm 33:5 NIV

healing

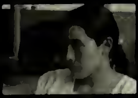


SEEING. Natural disasters, wars and other conflicts put the lives of millions of people in jeopardy every year. Some

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to

BELIEVING. Jesus Christ calls us in a very simple and clear voice. I was hungry, I was naked, I was thirsty, and you gave me food, clothing and something to drink. The truth is, whoever has done this for the least among us has done it for Christ.

DOING. At the very roots of MCC is emergency relief. This assistance comes in the form of cash for a Ugandan hospital fighting Ebola, food to victims of the India earthquake, survival kits to families fleeing floods in Mozambique, school kits for orphans in the Ukraine, and relief kits to victims of the El Salvador earthquake.



these tragic events call out to us from the television screen. More often they lie hidden from view.

Matthew 9:36 NIV

HUMANITARIAN AID
RELIEF
HANDLE WITH CARE

help

SEEING. As the reach of economic
from poverty risks becoming a deeper

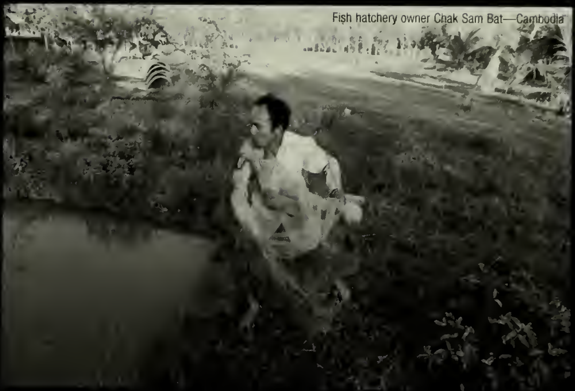
BELIEVING. Christ has called us to share our resources. This exchange
and dignity that comes through Christ's love. It becomes a path leading

"And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:2 NIV

DOING. From the hamlets of Cambodia, to the villages of Zambia and towns of El Salvador, MCC is working to build the capacity of local churches and service agencies. With MCC's support, decisions about community health, digging wells, planting crops, healing conflict, are being made where they count most, in local communities.

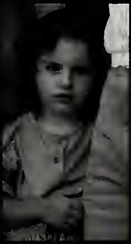
balization broadens, the will of people at a local level is more easily ignored. Their struggle to emerge uggle against increased dependency and oppression by outside forces.

comes a reflection of the hope ard sharing power.



Fish hatchery owner Chak Sam Bat—Cambodia

hope

	april 2000	may	june	july	august	september
relief	MCC ships aid to Venezuela, North Korea, Mozambique and Ethiopia in response to various disaster situations.	After months of delays, the U.S. government allows MCC to forward a shipment of hospital equipment to Iraq.		Through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, MCC distributes food in Ethiopia to 14,000 displaced people.		The MCC East Coa material resource center expansion is celebrated with an open house and dedication. The center can now accommodate large volunteer groups an more material resources.
capacity building	Two MCC workers are placed in San Pedro Carcha, Guatemala, with the recently opened Bezaleel Educational Center, a boarding school supported by the K'ekchi Mennonite Church.		Bumunang Peter Vusas, from PresCraft in Cameroon, visits more than a dozen Ten Thousand Villages stores in the U.S. demonstrating musical instruments made in Cameroon and sold in Ten Thousand Villages stores.	MCC funds provide for nearly 18,000 fruit trees to be planted in a former Israeli security zone in southern Lebanon. MCC begins working with community-based organizations in Zambia serving widows and children orphaned by AIDS.	Two new Ten Thousand Villages stores open, one in Brookline, Mass., and another in Salt Lake City, Utah. Six others open in 2000 in Canada and the U.S.	
peace		MCC strengthens its presence at the United Nations by hiring a full time liaison and opening a new office adjacent to the U.N. Plaza in New York.	Regional peace workers in the Balkans attend a peace building seminar in Corrymeela, Ireland, sponsored by MCC and the Mediation Network.			Oxford University Pr publishes "From th Ground Up: Mennon Contributions to International Peace Building." MCC cas studies are feature MCC workers assis conflict resolution between two Indones Mennonite churche
connecting	Groundbreaking takes place for the Welcoming Place, the new lodging and meeting facilities at MCC in Akron.	The first ever Central California Cross-Cultural Tour to increase awareness between Anglo and Hispanic Mennonites occurs thanks to the sponsorship of West Coast MCC.	A longtime friend of MCC, Reverend Stephen N. Ndlovu, died after a lengthy illness. "The whole African continent and the world church have experienced a great loss," writes Doris Dube, MCC country co-representative in Zimbabwe.	MCC British Columbia sponsors an Aboriginal Peace tour, including visits to forests planted by Conscientious Objectors from World War II and aboriginal communities.	International Visitor Exchange Program celebrates 50 years of bringing young people to Canada and the U.S. for a one year cultural exchange. First annual Lakota Perspectives Learning Tour at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota brings Lakota and Mennonite partners together.	The 25th anniversa edition of the More with-Less Cookboo is released. "Thank you, More-with-Les and you, Mom, for years of good food and the education that came with it," says Teresa Reime a fan of the best-selling cookbook.

[illegible]

ıergency aid and ıds are sent to lestine in response increased violence tween Israelis and lestinians.

:C ships 7,000 ıool kits to Liberia, :ountry recovering m seven years of il war.

response to owing concerns er genetically gineered foods, onsultation on technology and d security is held Winnipeg and onsored by MCC od, Disaster, and terial Resources ice and MCC Peace ice.

november

MCC receives the St. Boniface Medical Research Foundation "2000 International Award" for outstanding humanitarian contributions.

The first steps in resolving a deadly dispute between two groups in northern Uganda are taken. MCC workers assist in peace talks between the Acholi and Karimajong communities

The Abundant Blessings Thrift Shop in Mifflintown, Pa., opens its doors. First month's sales are more than $10,000 U.S. The nearly 100 MCC thrift shops in Canada and the U.S. raise more than $6 million Cdn./ $4 million U.S. in 2000.

december

MCC pledges money to help Lacor Hospital in northern Uganda lead the fight against an Ebola outbreak.

New wells are built in Mozambique bringing more than water to wash and drink—they are symbolic of the water of life.

MCC Canada supports a Jubilee proclamation calling Christians to restore right relations with the earth and aboriginal peoples.

MCC U.S. encourages taxpayers to support Columbian Mennonite peace work through a Taxes for Peace fund.

MCC Great Lakes constructs a 14,400-square-foot "MCC Connections" activities center in Kidron, Ohio. It includes space for a thrift shop, used furniture and household goods resale shop, quilting center, and material resources center.

january
2001

2,655 school kits are distributed to children in Cambodia.

MCC provides $1,115,400 Cdn./ $700,000 U.S. for relief and housing reconstruction after earthquakes in India and El Salvador .

A new MCC U.S. poster encourages people of color to consider how racism has shaped their images of Jesus.

The award-winning play "Torba" opens at Eastern Mennonite University. The play chronicles the powerful stories of the people of the war-torn Balkans as told by former MCC Croatia worker Amy Gopp.

february

The first annual South Texas Relief Sale raises more than $20,000 U.S. An additional 42 relief sales held across Canada and the U.S. in 2000 provide family fun and raise more than $6 million Cdn./$4 million U.S. for MCC.

MCC's Global Family Program starts sponsorship opportunities in China.

Delores and J. Stanley Friesen of Fresno, Calif., assist MCC in developing a strategy to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa.

"Work and Learn" teams from Canada and the U.S. are added to El Salvador reconstruction plans. The teams come as representatives of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches to work with Salvadoran churches in rebuilding.

march

A state of disaster was declared by the Mozambique government as 80,000 people lost their homes to heavy rain and floods. MCC aid followed in April, including food from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

A new employment program sponsored by MCC British Columbia helps young people to start their own businesses.

To help promote conflict resolution, MCC works with Kenya's Community Peace Museums Program to introduce "peace clubs" in nearly 40 schools.

Numbers are best at giving us the broad picture of MCC activity for the past year. They are also a gateway for learning about the details of MCC's work. For example, this year $9.7 million was given to MCC through thrift shops, relief sales and Houses Against Hunger. This figure is impressive, but even more impressive are the uncounted thousands of volunteers who dedicated time to the shops and sales. If we look at the numbers of MCC workers across the globe, we are many people in many places doing many different things. But once again, behind the numbers are people dedicated to walking and working with those struggling to improve their lives, bring justice and share the love of Christ. Look at the numbers for what they are, then consider what lies behind them.

PEOPLE AT WORK [Number of board-appointed and locally employed wc

NUMBER		
		Bangladesh (232)
	Pennsylvania (154) Manitoba (92) Ontario (89)	
+		Cambodia (47)
33	British Columbia	
32		India
28		
27		
23		Indonesia
21		China
20	Alberta	
19	California	
18	Saskatchewan	
17		Vietnam
16		
15		Laos
14		
13	Florida	
12	Kentucky	Philippines
10		
9	Kansas Washington, D.C.	
8		
7		
6	Ohio South Dakota Texas	
5	Indiana New Brunswick	
4	Louisiana Quebec	Burma Nepal
3	New York Nova Scotia	
2	Arizona Illinois Labrador/Nfl.	Iraq Iran Thailand
1	Alabama Michigan Virginia	Japan
	NORTH AMERICA 519	**ASIA 414**

		U.S. DOLLARS
Cash gifts		**$20,987,000↓**
Canadian contributions	6,800,000	
U.S. contributions	14,009,000	
Other contributions	178,000	
Gifts-in-kind		**5,531,000↓**
Grants		**9,232,000↓**
Non-governmental	1,207,000	
Governmental	8,025,000	
Shops, relief sales, houses		**9,791,000↑**
Other income		**3,072,000↓**
Ten Thousand Villages sales		**14,573,000↑**
TOTAL INCOME		**$63,186,000↓**

		U.S. DOLLARS
International program		**$27,273,000↓**
Country program	25,385,000	
Other overseas program	1,888,000	
North American program		**9,843,000↑**
Canada program	**6,390,000**	
Community Ministries	5,283,000	
Peace and Justice Ministries	736,000	
Material resources collection	371,000	
U.S. program	**3,453,000**	
Community Ministries	1,791,000	
Peace and Justice Ministries	1,186,000	
Material resources collection	476,000	
Support and administration		**5,321,000↑**
Fund-raising		**1,122,000↑**
Ten Thousand Villages operating expenses		**14,287,000↑**
TOTAL EXPENSES		**$57,846,000↓**

YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK [International and North American prc

U.S. DOLLARS		
	Canada ($6,390,000)	
+	United States ($3,453,000)	India ($2,431,000)
$1,600,000		North & South Korea ($1,640,000)
1,400,000		
		Bangladesh
1,200,000		
1,000,000		
800,000		
		Iraq
600,000		
		Cambodia
400,000		Indonesia
		China
		Iran Philippines Vietnam
200,000		Afghanistan
		Laos
		Burma Nepal
		Japan
	NORTH AMERICA **$9,843,000**	ASIA **$8,913,000**

↑↓ increase or decrease compared to last year

The data summarize the activity of 12 MCC entities as reported in seven financial statements in Canada and the U.S. Audited financial statements are available upon request.

location as of March 31, 2001]

▬ Locations with MCC personnel
▬ Locations receiving financial assistance but no MCC personnel

Bolivia (56)				
	Burkina Faso			
Brazil				
Haiti	Tanzania			23
				21
Jamaica Mexico				20
				19
	Zambia			18
	Mozambique			17
	D.R. of Congo Uganda			16
Nicaragua				15
	Kenya	Egypt	Ukraine	14
				13
El Salvador Honduras				12
Guatemala				10
	Ethiopia Nigeria			9
	Botswana	West Bank/Gaza		8
	South Africa			7
		Jordan Lebanon	Southeast Europe	6
Paraguay	Chad		Switzerland	5
	Rwanda			4
Peru	Angola Sudan Zimbabwe	Syria		3
Colombia Costa Rica	Burundi Swaziland		Germany Northern Ireland	2
				1
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN 207	**AFRICA 187**	**MIDDLE EAST 37**	**EUROPE 29**	

enses including cash and material resources for April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2001]

				U.S. DOLLARS
	Ethiopia ($1,700,000)			+ $1,600,000
			Southeast Europe	
			Russia/Ukraine	1,400,000
				1,200,000
				1,000,000
				800,000
Bolivia				
Honduras				
Nicaragua Venezuela	Mozambique			600,000
		West Bank/Gaza		
Haiti Mexico				
Guatemala				400,000
El Salvador	Kenya			
Brazil Colombia	Burkina Faso D.R. Congo Sudan			
Jamaica	Tanzania	Lebanon		200,000
	Angola Uganda South Africa Zambia	Egypt Jordan	Switzerland	
Paraguay	Botswana Chad Nigeria Rwanda			
	Somalia Zimbabwe	Syria		
Argentina Belize Cuba Ecuador Uruguay	Lesotho Liberia Swaziland	Turkey	N. Ireland Germany	
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN $5,701,000	**AFRICA $5,920,000**	**MIDDLE EAST $1,406,000**	**EUROPE $3,445,000**	

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a Common Place

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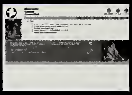
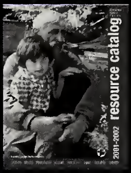


www.mcc.org

Learn about recent events and the world of MCC. Go online and discover for yourself. There's something new every week.

Request …



MCC Resource Catalog

Request videos, posters, resource boxes and more for yourself, your church, your school or your study group. Get your FREE catalog from any MCC office.

Share …

giving projects
2001-2002

Giving Projects

Share your resources by supporting MCC giving projects. Call for your FREE giving projects catalog that includes global projects, posters and educational activities to try with your Sunday school class or family.

Sponsor …

Global Family

Sponsor a child and make a dream come true. Call for information on how you can help MCC educate children and build stronger communities around the world through the Global Family Program.

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Edited by Mark Beach. Designed by Julie Kauffman. Photo credits: Cover and page 3 by Tony Siemens; pages 4-5 by Sonja Houy; pages 6-7 by Carol Thiessen; pages 10-11 by Jack Leonard; pages 8-9, 12-13 MCC files. *010502jek40m Printed in USA.*

Networks bathe the church in prayer

New denomination getting intercessory support

As denominational leaders work to create Mennonite Church USA, leading up to next month's convention in Nashville, Tenn., many people are standing—and sitting and kneeling—alongside them. That includes dozens of members of two prayer networks interceding during the anticipated merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

"This needs to be totally undergirded by prayer and be God's," says Roma Eicher, coordinator of one of the networks. "We want him to build his church his way, not any person's way, because we, as Mennonites, are his people."

Eicher, of Albany, Ore., is chair of the adult planning committee for the Nashville convention. When the committee first started meeting last August, members decided to pray for and support each other. Eicher started sending weekly "Nashville Monday" emails with prayer requests, Scripture, short devotionals and convention updates.

The emails originally went to the committee members and the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. Then earlier this year, some convention registrants started returning their registration forms having marked that they wanted to serve on a prayer team. Eicher's network now includes nearly 50 people who regularly uphold the church in prayer.

"It keeps Nashville 2001 as a priority," she says. "I really like what one of the [adult planning committee] members said, ... 'You know, our day has just been bathed in prayer.' That's what we want for Nashville 2001, [to be] saturated with God's Spirit."

Among those receiving Eicher's "Nashville Monday" emails is Ginny Gunnison from Community Mennonite Fellowship of Corning, N.Y., and a member of the New York Conference executive committee. She has been involved in developing several local and conference prayer networks. When Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director-designate, met with the New York executive committee last year, Gunnison asked if there was a denominational prayer network.

"He said no and asked if I would be interested in starting one," she says.

Building off a Mennonite Board of Missions' prayer list, Gunnison's network has grown to more than 50 names. Participants have prayed for a missional church, understanding of the proposed membership guidelines, preparation for Nashville delegates and more.

"I believe Scripture is clear that you have not because you ask not," says Gunnison, who wants to continue the initiative beyond the Nashville convention. "I believe Jesus, before any important decision, prayed."

She sees the network as a link from the leadership to the people in the pew. Schrag provides most of the prayer requests, although Gunnison has also funneled ideas back to him.

"It's a good way not only to pray but to raise awareness and dialogue," she says.

That has been a benefit of Eicher's and Gunnison's networks as well as of less-organized prayer efforts, says Lee Snyder, moderator of Mennonite Church USA. "When people pray for something they care about, they become involved personally," she says.

At Nashville, Eicher's volunteers, numbering about 40, will be divided into teams of two or three, each with different responsibilities. Some will conduct prayer walks through the convention center, while others will pray continuously during delegate sessions or worship times. They will also respond to conventiongoers' prayer requests.

"Prayer has been an undergirding force that has contributed much to the process," Snyder says. "It's been a spiritual experience. It's what gives me courage going into Nashville. ... This isn't a job we can do. This is a job where we have to open ourselves to the Spirit's leading so God can work through us."—*Rich Preheim*

I believe Scripture is clear that you have not because you ask not. I believe Jesus, before any important decision, prayed.

—Ginny Gunnison

MCC photo by Christine Elias

Many hands make light work

Women from Colony Cupesi, a Bolivian Mennonite colony, help fill 3,200 Mennonite Central Committee school kits for victims of February flooding in Pailon, Bolivia. The supplies were purchased locally and distributed at five schools. While numerous organizations worked to meet housing and employment needs, education was neglected, say MCC workers.

MBM

Lourdes (left) and Brent Hartzler (back right), former mission workers in Argentina, accompany the children in singing at their congregation in Cancha Huinganco, a rural valley community of 500 people in the Andes Mountains. The group also included the Hartzlers' daughters Alejandra (center, with microphone) and Natasha Hartzler (front right, in stripes).

Relationships mark Argentina mission

Spending time with people most important, workers say

ELKHART, Ind.—A pickup truck, crayons and conversations. For Brent and Lourdes Hartzler, these were the tools of rural ministry in Patagonia, a mountainous region in southern Argentina.

The Hartzlers, appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission, completed their assignment in May, after 20 months serving in the Patagonia Mission Project, an outreach initiative of the Argentina Mennonite Church.

The Hartzlers and their four daughters lived in Chos Malal, a town in the Andes Mountains, and ministered in Cancha Huinganco, a rural valley community of 500 people. Each week, the family drove 30 miles to the church in Cancha Huinganco in their pickup truck, stopping wherever they saw trees.

"Trees only grow where there are people to water them, so if you see a tree, you know you'll find a house there," Brent says.

They would continue their visits until they reached the church. There, about 30 people joined them for a meal, singing and stories about Jesus.

"The most important thing there is spending time with people," Brent says. "At first, they were quiet and reserved with us. … Toward the end, we could just go and talk. We could see all the barriers breaking down."

Lourdes said one of the joys of their ministry was seeing the children at the church. "They would be there waiting for us before we even showed up," she says.

With help from photocopied pictures and crayons, the Hartzlers also told stories about Jesus and helped the children memorize Bible verses. "When we did crafts, even the adults came. Coloring was new to them," Lourdes says. Most of the adults can't read or write, so pictures and stories became the primary way of teaching the Bible.

> **When we did crafts, even the adults came. Coloring was new to them.**
>
> *—Lourdes Hartzler*

Cancha Huinganco also has a Catholic church, but the priest comes only a few times each year for baptisms, Brent says.

The Hartzlers worked at building the church through relationships but also through improving the church building. Brent built tables, benches and a pingpong table. Lourdes collected dishes for fellowship meals.

Argentinian Mennonites traveled to Cancha Huinganco in February to rebuild the roof of the church, which had blown off in a severe wind. They also added a second-floor loft and lights inside the church. Youth groups visited in the summer for fellowship and outreach.

The Patagonia Mission Project works at church planting in rural areas of Patagonia. Brent says the church leaders have "contagious enthusiasm," and the youth, in particular, have a strong passion for evangelism.

"It's really amazing what they've been able to do with the very small amount of funds they have," Brent said. In addition to 10 outreach locations in Argentina, the project has also sent three women to minister in Chile.

The Hartzlers also found ways to reach out from their home in Chos Malal. Lourdes enjoyed welcoming visitors into their home and spent time with neighbors. When the families sat down at a meal together, one neighbor turned to Lourdes and said, "OK, Lourdes, do your thing," as a way of inviting her to pray for the meal. Brent taught English in their youngest daughters' classroom.

The Hartzlers are now at home in Bird-in-Hand, Pa.—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Correction: "MMA Meeting Aids Minnesota Church" in the June 12 issue contained several errors. United Hmong Mennonite Church is located in St. Paul, Minn., and the pastor is Tong Hang. The congregation is still meeting in a local Lutheran church.

Goshen adds Cuba to SST program

GOSHEN, Ind.—Although only 90 miles separate the United States and Cuba, the chasm between the two countries is wide. But Goshen College will span that gap starting next year with the first semesterlong study and service course from a U.S. college to the island nation.

The initiative, part of Goshen's Study-Service Term, comes in the face of U.S. travel restrictions and economic embargo against communist Cuba. The school had to receive approval from both the U.S. Treasury Department, which manages the embargo, and the Cuban Bureau of Religious Affairs. Wilbur Birky, Goshen's director of international education, says getting Cuban permission was as challenging as getting the Treasury Department license.

"At first we were denied permission because [Cuban officials] could not imagine a three-month visit, since they were accustomed to two- and three-week visits [from U.S. college groups]," says Birky, who started the application process in 1998.

While it is not illegal to go to Cuba, Americans are restricted on how much money they can spend in the country. But Birky says the limit on how much can be spent each day is so high that it will not be a problem.

The first group of 23 students will go to Cuba next May. They will spend their first six weeks in Havana, studying Cuban culture and the Spanish language. During the second half of the term, students will live in Cárdenas, Elián González's hometown, at the Center for Christian Dialogue and Reflection and serve in agricultural, ecological, community development or other service-oriented jobs .

"This is an opportunity for students to be exposed to a political and economic system that is very different from ours," says Goshen vice president for student life Carlos Romero, who, with his wife, Celina, will be leading the group. "To be able to be engaged, interact and adjust the assumptions we take to Cuba using critical judgment—that is education at its best. I'm convinced you can't go to Cuba for three months and not come back a different person."

Says Birky, "Our job will be to understand the Cuban society, not to react to it."

Although there are Mennonites in Cuba, Goshen does not plan to have its SST group connect with them. Birky says they are in rural areas inaccessible to the students and are also undergoing some "leadership changes."
—Ryan Miller and Everett J. Thomas

Wedding bells call workers back to Japan

ELKHART, Ind.—Don and Barbara Reber, who served in Japan with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) from 1952 to 1966, are returning to that country for a wedding. Several dozen weddings, actually.

Rather than tying the knot in a traditional Japanese Shinto ceremony, 65 percent of all couples are now getting married in "Western Christian style," whether they are Christian or not. That has prompted a Japanese pastor to start Christian Bridal Mission as a way to plant the seeds of faith.

At the organization's invitation, the Rebers will serve in Japan for three or four months with MBM and the Commission on Overseas Mission. Don will perform four to six wedding ceremonies a week and do premarital counseling. Barbara will interview Japanese Christian and non-Christian couples to study the impact of Western Christian ceremonies.

"If the door to witness is open, we should walk through it," says Don Reber.

During their time in Japan, the Rebers also plan to meet with Anabaptist pastors in the Tokyo area.*—Joni Sancken of MBM News Service*

New Goshen major is sign of the times

By offering studies in American Sign Language (ASL), Goshen (Ind.) College wants to cross cultural boundaries.

At its June 1-2 meetings, the Goshen board of overseers unanimously supported an ASL major and minor. The plan still needs to be approved by Mennonite Board of Education. Goshen has offered ASL classes for nearly a decade.

Myron Yoder, assistant professor of ASL, told the board that interpreters for the deaf consider themselves "cross-cultural mediators." ASL students are introduced to another language as well as to a minority group, he said.

Yoder noted increased demand for services for the deaf in church settings, a need expressed earlier this year when the Anabaptist Deaf Ministries Board met on the Goshen campus.

"The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and the increase of deaf children in public schools also have caused the demand for interpreters to skyrocket," he said.

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this date in Mennonite history

June 26, 1917—Four representatives of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, meet in Washington with a Kansas Congressman and the Provost Marshall to petition for draft exemptions.

Africans, Dutch: Get to know each other

SCHOORL, Netherlands—Taking their cue from Revelation and its image of "a multitude from every nation" praising God, a conference of African and Dutch Anabaptists have urged their brothers and sisters around the world to get to know each other.

Under the auspices of Mennonite World Conference, a dozen Anabaptist women from Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe last month concluded a monthlong visit among Mennonites in the Netherlands. During their stay, they held a four-day conference at a Mennonite retreat center, where they drafted a statement encouraging further efforts to build the global community of faith.

"We challenge others within the Anabaptist tradition to image the multitude described in Revelation: to get to know each other and to learn through mutual sharing of experiences and traditions between South, North, West and East," the statement said.—*MWC News Service*

Investors hopeful for porn network dialogue

GOSHEN, Ind.—After nearly a year of futility, a coalition of 29 religious institutional investors concerned about AT&T's partnership with the pornographic Hot Network feel they finally can be heard.

AT&T chair and chief executive officer C. Michael Armstrong has agreed to meet with coalition representatives following comments presented last month at the communication giant's annual shareholder meeting by Mark Regier of Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) and Vidette Bullock Mixon from the United Methodist Church. The group has been protesting the addition of the Hot Network to AT&T's cable systems.

"While it doesn't signify a policy change by the company, the commitment to a meeting will hopefully allow us to begin a meaningful dialogue with AT&T management over our concerns about the mainstreaming of pornography at our nation's largest cable operator," says Regier, the coalition's coordinator.

No date or location for the meeting have been set, but he hopes it will happen before the end of the summer.—*MMA News Service*

Manitoba thrift stores receive volunteer award

WINNIPEG—Manitoba's 17 Mennonite Central Committee thrift stores and their 2,500 volunteers have been honored for their grass-roots efforts to confront poverty and injustice. The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) made its Award for Contribution of Volunteers at a May 25 ceremony in Ottawa.

"Button by button, shirt by skirt, the work of MCC thrift-store volunteers serves to alleviate poverty around the world," said Jennifer deGroot of the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, who made the nomination. —*MCC Canada News Service*

EMU hires new women's basketball coach

HARRISONBURG, Va.—A former coach at National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I schools has been named head women's basketball coach at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, an NCAA Division III member. Mike Dunavant was most recently head girls' basketball coach at Central Virginia High School in Richmond. His previous college head coaching stints have included Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond and Rice University in Houston, Texas. Dunavant succeeds Douglas R. Hochstetler.

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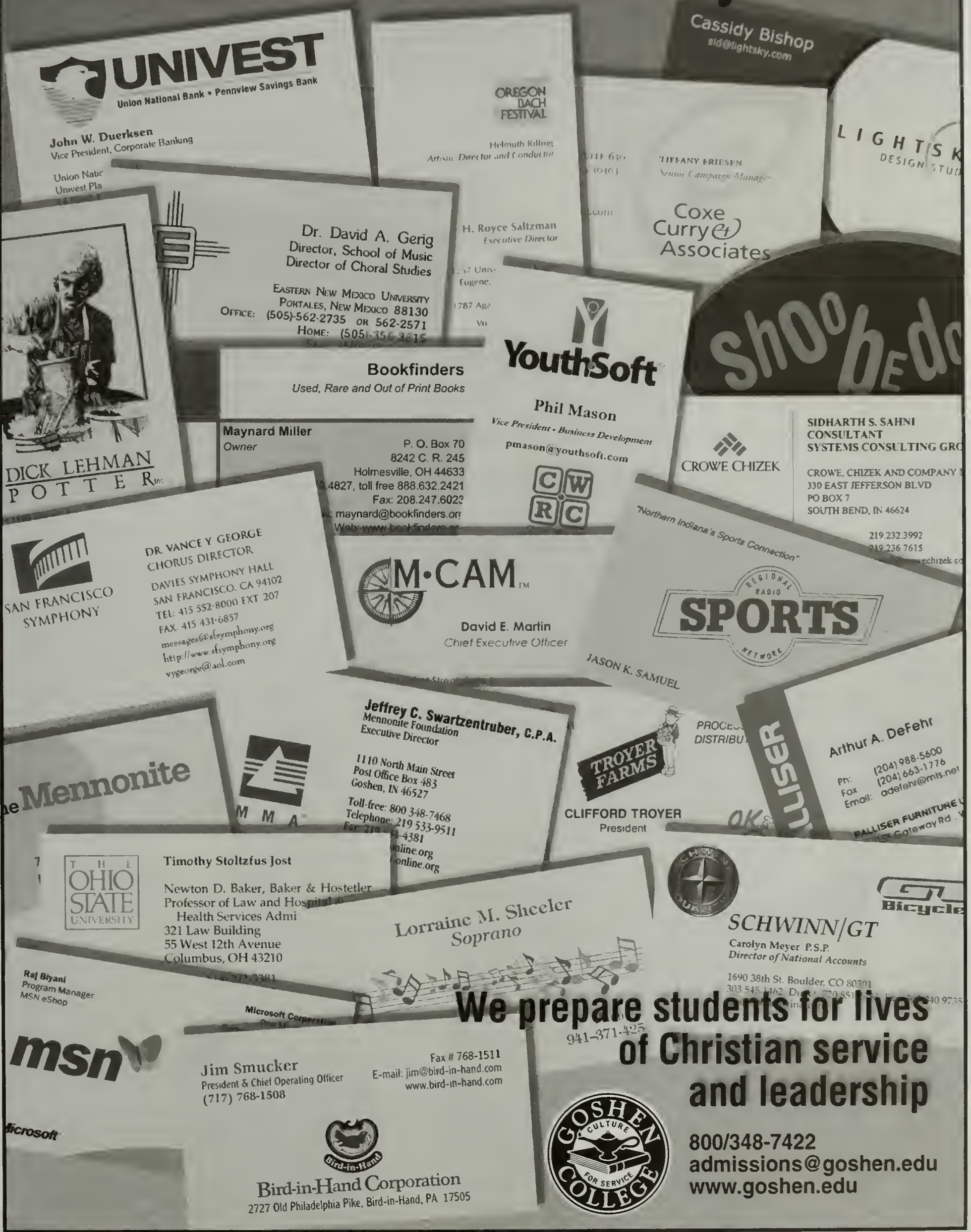
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Workers

Bontrager, Brent, was ordained March 25 at Coldsprings Christian Fellowship, Mancelona, Mich.

Culver, Wes, was licensed and installed March 11 as associate pastor at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Gehring, Barbara Krehbiel, was ordained June 10 at Manhattan (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Huffman, Rob, was licensed April 8 as youth minister at Peace Christian Fellowship, North Point, Fla.

Kniss, Dave, was installed March 18 as youth minister at Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

MacMaster, Eve, was installed March 18 as pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Gainesville, Fla.

Ostlund, James, was installed June 10 as associate pastor at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Pacheco, Reinaldo (Ray), was installed March 4 as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Schmidt, Steve, will begin Aug. 1 as pastor of Emmanuel Mennonite Church, LaJunta, Colo. He previously served as pastor of New Creation Fellowship Church, Newton, Kan.

Winget, Gary, concluded a pastorate May 27 at Hanston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Births

Erb, Chloe Michal, May 26, to Kimber (Hofer) and Kristian Erb, Plain City, Ohio.

Good, Jacob David, May 20, to Michael and Stacey (Halvorsen) Good, St. Jacobs, Ont.

Hofer-Holdeman, Lucas Reed, May 22, to Eric and Vicki Hofer-Holdeman, Wichita, Kan.

Keim, Daniel Abram, April 17, to Kirby and Yvonne (Moyer) Keim, Sarasota, Fla.

Leavy, Matthew James, June 5, to Kristel (Musselman) and Michael Leavy, Souderton, Pa.

Miller, Brenden Jacob, May 16, to Jeremy and Tosha (Fougeron) Miller, Milford, Neb.

Miller, Brielle Elizabeth, April 20, to Elizabeth (Schlabach) and Jim Miller, Sarasota, Fla.

Paul, Kaylee Jenna, June 3, to Cinthia (Moyer) and Kenneth Paul, Boyertown, Pa.

Thompson, Jacob Micheal Levi, April 26, to Jim and Kelly (Stringer) Thompson, Newberg, Ore.

Wenger, Morgan Christina, May 22, received for adoption May 23, to Jeffrey and Lynelle (Sollenberger) Wenger, Landisville, Pa.

Marriages

Brown/Frey: Daniel Brown, Downs, Ill., and Patricia Frey, Wauseon, Ohio, May 26 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Chelli/Seewer: Samir Chelli, Lausanne, Switzerland, and Gabriela Seewer, Bhel, Switzerland, May 11.

Doerksen/Hooley: Sheri Doerksen, Phoenix, and Bruce Hooley, Columbus, Ohio, April 21 at Scottsdale Bible Church, Phoenix.

Ebersole/Ehst: Brenton Ebersole, Manheim, Pa., and Angela Ehst, May 19.

Esch/Yoder: Melinda Esch, Harrisonburg, Va., and Aaron Yoder, Harrisonburg, May 26.

Harrison/Miller: Lewis Harrison, Marysville, Ohio, and Sharon Miller, Plain City, Ohio, April 28 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.

Holliday/Oswald: Jeff Holliday, Denver, and Lori Oswald, Denver, May 5 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Jordan/Moyer: Randall L. Jordan, King of Prussia, Pa., and Jayme D. Moyer, Sellersville, Pa., June 2 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Keyser/Knox: Scott Keyser, Scottdale, Pa., and Melissa Knox, Youngwood, Pa., June 2 at Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale.

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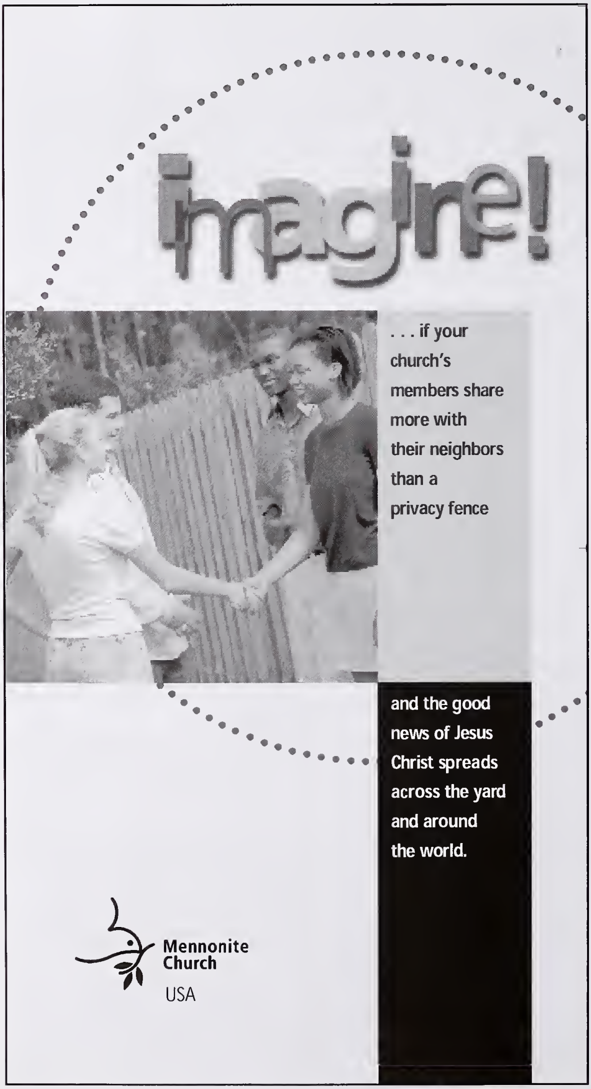
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Martin/Schmitz: Darren Martin and Lisa Schmitz, Conestogo, Ont., June 2 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.
Troyer/Vanden Brink: Allison Troyer, Wooster, Ohio, and Eric Vanden Brink, Holland, Mich., May 27 at Wooster.

Deaths

Allebach, Grace A., 94, Sellersville, Pa., died June 3 of cardiac arrhythmia. Parents: Mamie A. and Wilson Allebach (deceased). Funeral: June 6 at Blooming Glen, Pa.
Boese, Marguerite Unruh, 93, Great Bend, Kan., died May 17 of pneumonia. Spouse: Lewis Boese (deceased). Parents: Henry B. and Kate Jantz Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Twila Bedford, Genevieve Lyon, Ann; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; 4 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 21 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.
Bollman, Mabel Welty, 91, Nappanee, Ind., died May 24. Spouse: Roy A. Bollman (deceased). Parents: William and Bessie Hess Welty (deceased). Survivors: children Glenwyn Cassel, Shirley Bricker, Kenneth, Sherlin; 12 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 26 at Goshen, Ind.
Freed, Elsie A. Derstine, 97, Souderton, Pa., died June 5. Spouse: Elmer H. Freed (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Sallie Alderfer Derstine (deceased). Survivors: children Doris D. Nice, W. Glenn; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 8 at Souderton Mennonite Home.
Garver, Ben, 78, Plain City, Ohio, died March 31 of congestive heart failure. Survivors: children Vickie Elston, Edna Mae Rosen; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 3 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.
Groff, Verna Mae Brandt, 87, Mount Joy, Pa., died May 28 of a fall. Spouse: Omar G. Groff (deceased). Parents: Phares Y. and Katie C. Hauenstein Brandt (deceased). Survivors: stepson Charles O. Groff; three stepgranddaughters; two stepgreat-grandsons. Funeral: May 31 at Erisman Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.
Martens, Agnes Toews, 95, Mountain Lake, Minn., died May 27. Spouse: Frank P. Martens (deceased). Parents: Henry and Helena Falk Toews (deceased). Survivors: children James, Richard; eight grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 31 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.
Mellinger, Howard D., 95, Sterling, Ill., died April 6. Spouse: Mildred Mellinger (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Anna Andreas Mellinger (deceased). Survivors: children Erwin, Leonard; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 9 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.
Reichenbach, Mary Kay, 84, Findlay, Ohio, died May 9. Spouse: Ralph Reichenbach (deceased). Parents: Carl and M. Flay Romick (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Layne, Edward, Ralph, Douglas, Mary Waltz, Sally Tracy; 19 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 12 at Coldren-Crates Funeral Home, Findlay, Ohio.
Shoemaker, Tom, 50, Plain City, Ohio, died May 11 of cancer. Spouse: Patricia Graber Shoemaker. Parents: Betty and George Shoemaker. Other survivors: children Amy, Jill, Jared (Nikki). Funeral: May 14 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City.
Smith, Ronald J., 52, Orrville, Ohio, died May 22 of cancer. Spouse: Rita J. "Jeanie" Kandel Smith. Parents: James E. and Dora Ertel Smith (deceased). Other survivors: children Darin, Molly. Funeral: May 26 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville.
Troyer, Leonard E., 80, Milford, Neb., died May 20 of cancer. Spouse: Eleanor Troyer. Parents: Melvin and Mary Saltzman Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Pam Erb, Karen Barker, Terry, Tom, Tim; 15 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 23 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

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- **Mount Pleasant Christian School**, a K-8 school in Chesapeake, Va., seeks a ***principal/administrator***. Minimum requirements include 5 years teaching experience, Mennonite church membership and a dynamic relationship with Christ.

  Send resume to 1613 Mount Pleasant Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322; 757-482-9557; email <mpcs4kids@assure.net>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Edmonton, Alberta, is looking for a full-time ***pastor***. We are a growing, multigenerational congregation of 200+ members and adherents. Our congregation is committed to Mennonite-Anabaptist faith beliefs, celebrates diversity and variety in worship, includes music as a significant aspect of worship life and is committed to area and national conference affiliations.

  For further information, or to apply for this position, please contact Adela Wedler, 1903-111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>

- **Raleigh Mennonite Church**, <http://rtpnet.org/~rmc>, Raleigh, N.C. a vibrant, urban congregation committed to racial reconciliation and anti-racism, invites applicants for two half-time positions: ***youth pastor*** and ***congregational peace center director***. People of color, women and couples are especially encouraged to apply. Positions available early fall.

  Please send cover letter and resume indicating areas of interest to Brenda Herb, Raleigh Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 25545, Raleigh, NC 27611-5545; email <theherbs@hotmail.com>.

- **Virginia Mennonite Conference** is seeking a person to serve as ***conference coordinator***. This individual will be responsible for the administrative functions of VMC offices and provide leadership in fund raising. Administrative and supervision experience and awareness of the Mennonite Church required. Will function as a peer of the conference minister in providing visionary leadership for a conference of 80 congregations organized in 11 districts, scattered over 6 states and the District of Columbia.

  Contact Ken Weaver (540-833-1449) or Lois Maust (540-434-9727) for an application and position description. Applications with resumes accepted through July 31.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a rapidly growing retirement community in Lancaster County, Pa., seeks a ***director of fund development/public relations***. This individual is responsible for the growth and development of board-approved fund-raising campaigns.

  Send inquiries to Human Resources, 433 S. Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-355-6039.

- **Turpin Mennonite Church**, Turpin, Okla., is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Applicant would have the opportunity to minister to a congregation of varied ages and denominational backgrounds.

  Contact Shirley Eggers at 580-259-6457 or Alan Hodges at 580-778-3315.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** is accepting applications for ***elementary and middle school positions***. A bachelor's degree in education and current certification are required.

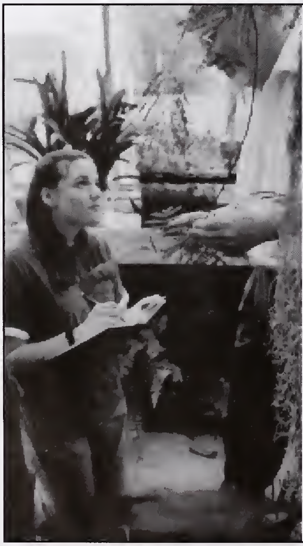
  Send a letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Are you, or someone you know, a manager**, administrator or leader with two or more years of experience living and working overseas? If so, Mennonite Central Committee invites you or your colleague to apply for one of the numerous MCC leadership openings. This year MCC needs leaders for ***El Salvador, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, south Florida, Colombia, Vietnam, Laos and Egypt***. Leadership openings in 2002 include, among others, ***Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Philippines and Bolivia***.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org> or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***chief operating officer/office and business manager***. Expectations and qualifications: (1) committed Christian with vision for discipling urban youth; (2) excellent management skills; (3) good communication skills; (4) training/experience in financial record-keeping, accounting; (5) experience or willingness to learn fund-raising skills. Responsibilities: prepare and monitor budget; implement development; organize and oversee office records and information systems; implement student process; reports directly to the Board; salary to be negotiated.

  Interested people should contact Polly Ann Brown, Board Member, 8111 Winston Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118.



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by Rich Preheim

History lessons

Sure, most early European immigrants to North America were Christian. That is evident by the stories of William Penn, Pilgrims and Puritans that have been handed down through the centuries. But as the United States approaches yet another birthday, *Spirituality and Health* offers a few historical facts that tarnish the image of this "Christian nation."

In fact, many groups disagreed over who was truly Christian. In the South, Anglicans and Baptists clashed over infant baptism, while in New England, Puritans accused Quakers of being heretics.

Such disputes often became overtly or covertly codified. Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island were the only ones of the original 13 colonies that did not have an "established" church closely linked to the government. Everyone in 17th-century Virginia was legally required to attend the Anglican Church and pay assessments for ministers' salaries. Those who refused were publicly whipped or imprisoned. In neighboring Maryland, which was founded by Roman Catholics, Protestants eventually took over and prohibited Catholics from voting, holding public office or worshiping outside their homes. It wasn't until the Bill of Rights in 1791 that all Americans were guaranteed the right to worship—or not worship—as they wished.

Does Jerry Springer know about this?

Skip *Survivor.* Turn off *Temptation Island.* Forget *Fear Factor.* An English network is ready to broadcast a new take on reality TV, according to *Sightings.* International Television next month will begin a 10-week series documenting the journey of 10 people, ages 22 to 37, through Alpha, a popular but controversial introductory course in Christianity. The show, which will be hosted by David Frost, will be taped at London's Trinity Brompton Church, where an Anglican cleric created Alpha in 1977.

Over the past decade Alpha has spread through England, where 60 universities have programs, and across the Atlantic Ocean. In the United States, more than half a million people have registered for almost 3,000 courses. Forty-two conferences are expected to draw 16,000 people this year.

Alpha sessions feature videos or live speakers, followed by lots of discussion. There are 15 sessions, interrupted in the middle by a spiritual retreat where participants pray for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Rock and roll souls (I)

It is ironic that John Lennon once claimed that the Beatles, of which he was a founding member, were more popular than Christ. It was an Anglican house of God in Liverpool that led to the creation of the legendary rock band. But plans to renovate that site at St. Peter's Church have some fans crying, "Help!"

Lennon's first band, the Quarrymen, played in St. Peter's church hall on July 6, 1957. At that performance, Lennon first met his future Beatles collaborator, Paul McCartney. But the Victorian-era hall is in poor shape and needs extensive repairs, reports *The Observer.* The congregation has approved a plan involving removing the stage to make way for kitchen and washroom facilities. The church—also the site of a gravestone bearing the name Eleanor Rigby (the title of a Beatles song)—is waiting for local planning approval before proceeding.

Meanwhile, in an effort to save the hall's stage, Beatles fans recently held a fund-raising re-enactment of the church fete where Lennon and McCartney met. But they collected only about $1,700 of the $600,000 needed. Overseas buyers, however, are said to be lining up with offers to purchase the stage.

Rock and roll souls (II)

None of its alumni have yet had the musical impact of the Beatles. But Greenville (Ill.) College does have Jars of Clay. The Christian rock band that has also found success in the secular music market was formed in the early 1990s when its members were students in Greenville's contemporary Christian music (CCM) program. They left school, however, for fame and fortune before finishing their degrees. So at this spring's commencement ceremony, Greenville conferred honorary degrees on the band members.

Light and Life notes that in addition to Jars of Clay, notable alumni of Greenville's CCM program include groups Stereo Deluxx and LPOutsiders, plus a host of recording industry employees and music ministers.

The bigger they come ...

This has to be a corollary to the Bible's teaching of the first shall be last and the last shall be first. According to the *Presbyterian Record,* 80 percent of the membership loss in the Presbyterian Church over the past 20 years came from congregations with more than 250 members, even though they account for only 21 percent of denominational congregations.

Tidbits

- Mormons are the most generous donors of any American church, giving nearly 7.5 percent of their income.—*Christianity Today*
- Forty-four percent of U.S. Protestant pastors support the legalization of marijuana for medical use. —*Ellison Research*
- From 1999 to 2000, Church of the Brethren membership dipped 2 percent to 135,879.—*Messenger*
- An Austrian group plans to host an exhibition of Chinese Christian art this fall in Salzburg, including oils, watercolors, wood carvings, calligraphy and paper cuts.—*Amity News Service*
- Ninety-seven percent of Catholic parishes in the United States have policies relating to sex abuse by their clergy.—*National Catholic Reporter*

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Everett J. Thomas

Leadership from a congregational point of view

Can 20 people lead a denomination of 118,000 by thinking first about the needs of congregations? Those who form the new Executive Board for Mennonite Church USA think so (see profile on page 8).

This new leadership board, created by delegate action at the St. Louis 99 convention, changed the way both the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) denominational structures were managed. In the old structures, both general boards were representative boards. Although there were some at-large positions, most members represented an area conference (MC) or a program board (GCMC). But in Mennonite Church USA, members of the new Executive Board are chosen to provide leadership for the whole system rather than to represent the interests of one part of the church.

"The new Executive Board has the unique role of caring for the whole from the point of view of the congregation," explains James Schrag, executive director-designate. "The 1971 MC reorganization took a step in this direction with the creation of the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM), but now congregational life is everyone's concern."

It bodes well for the future when those who know congregational life best are allowed to lead.

MBCM was one of five program boards in the MC structure. All of its programs and ministries will be incorporated into Executive Board offices in the model being proposed to delegates at Nashville 2001.

But will such a focus on congregational life divert attention from efforts to form a missional church?

"We may speak of a missional church," Schrag says, "but we understand ... that congregations are at the center of everything. The aspirations and hopes of congregations have been moved front and center with the way Executive Board offices have been structured."

These new structures include five departments or "offices": ministerial leadership, congregational life, convention planning, communications and administration/finances. A sixth office to ensure ministry to racial/ethnic groups has been approved but requires ongoing definition.

But even with substantial staff and authority as the top board, this new Executive Board is not the only leadership group in the church. Rather, it will be the leader of leaders. As the only board with a mandate to care for the whole, its task will be to ensure that those in leadership throughout the denomination are working in harmony and collaboration.

But can a board with just 20 people have the necessary wisdom to steer a system with such divergent expectations and traditions as will be present in the new Mennonite Church USA? Not without help from many of the other leaders present throughout the system. Consequently, a second and larger group will give counsel and direction to the new Executive Board.

Called the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC), it has met four times since its formation in 1999. This group of leaders, which Schrag calls the "jewel" in the system, has already had an impact on the process of merging two denominations into one.

The CLC's greatest contribution to the transformation process has been in the formation of membership guidelines, which will be presented to delegates in Nashville. For several years before the CLC tackled this issue, some earlier groups failed to resolve the question of who would be a member in Mennonite Church USA and who would decide. But after months of careful work and negotiations, the CLC was able to set a direction that the Executive Board embraced.

It should be no surprise that the CLC, a collection of gifted leaders with close ties to congregational life, was able to help the church overcome this impasse. It also bodes well for the future when those who know congregational life best are allowed to lead. If this fledging system works, then those leading the new denomination will do so with the best interests of congregations at heart.—*ejt*

Editor's note: This is the final editorial in a series profiling agencies being formed for the new Mennonite Church USA.

the Mennonite

July 3, 2001

return to community

page 4

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

School inclusion

In his article, “Help Our Youth Choose Their Colleges” (June 12), Loren Swartzendruber states: “Too many congregational members are concerned that we should financially support all our college students, no matter where they attend. The fact is that we do support those who attend public institutions when we pay taxes.”

Not all youth who attend non-Mennonite colleges attend public institutions. Swartzendruber’s argument leaves those who attend other private colleges without congregational support. Paying taxes shows no support to individuals who need help. It only shows a willingness to follow the law. The lack of individual support to students who attend non-Mennonite colleges can easily alienate students from the church. As a student planning to attend a non-Mennonite college in the fall, the message that Swartzendruber sends me is that I am somehow less important to the church simply because of my choice of college, although I have always been an active contributor to the church.

Mennonite colleges, while serving an important role, are only a few of the 3,200 post-secondary institutions in the United States and Canada. Please understand that the active support of youth who attend non-Mennonite colleges is just as important to the future of the church as the support of those who attend Mennonite institutions.—*Beth Peachey, Lancaster, Pa.*

We appreciate that the June 12 issue not only featured two articles dealing with higher education but also included a profile of the new Mennonite Education Agency, which encompasses the mission of the church through education in kindergarten through seminary years. We were disappointed that the issue was not more inclusive of kindergarten through grade 12, as intended in the new agency.

More than 10,000 students are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 in 35 Mennonite schools, members of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council and/or the Mennonite Elementary Education Council. The councils are jointly sponsoring the second Mennonite Educators Conference Sept. 27-29 in Chevy Chase, Md. Nearly 700 Mennonite educators are expected to attend. We encourage *The Mennonite* to cover this important educational event for our constituency. We are hopeful that in future issues, *The Mennonite* will incorporate a full range of Mennonite educational interests. —*Marjorie Geissinger, secretary, Mennonite Elementary Education Council, Quakertown, Pa.; Terry Schellenberg, secretary, Mennonite Secondary Education Council, Kitchener, Ont.*

Arrogant decisions

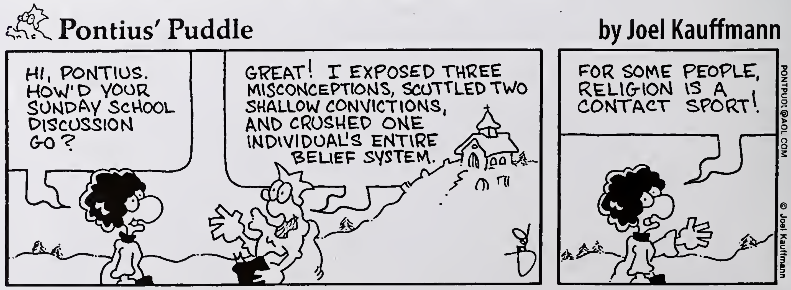
In “But Not Business as Usual” (June 5), Jonathan Smith asks the question, “What does it mean to let God decide and then follow that?” The assumption from the previous comments is that if we do Worshipful Work, then we will be able to let God decide; God will decide for us.

That is a bit frightening for me. Too often I hear people speak with certainty about what God says or what God wants us to do. It is as if they know God in a way that trumps the person with whom they disagree. Because God is said to have made our decisions, then we can avoid taking responsibility for our actions.

With great humility, we need to work toward discernment of God’s will. If all decisions in Worshipful Work are made with the full understanding of God’s love for all God’s children, then our decisions will be in line with God’s will. It’s not that we “let God decide” but rather that we commit ourselves to living and loving in the light of our limited understanding of God’s will. With the wisdom so graciously pro-

Pontius’ Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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Vol. 4, No. 25, July 3, 2001

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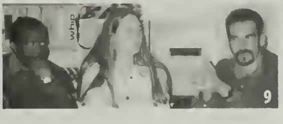

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

vided by our Creator and the Holy Spirit, we are able to move ahead in humility. But let's never be so arrogant as to say that God made the decision.—*Lois Kenagy, Albany, Ore.*

Family challenges racism

As a white landowner and as a wife and mother of multiethnic people (including Native and African-American), I was intrigued and challenged by Tobin Miller Shearer's "Quieted by the Land" (June 19). My own deeply ingrained racism is constantly challenged by my family. How true that we white folks can learn much from those whom we have disenfranchised—and whom we continue to oppress by treating our resources as ours rather than as God's. But how can white Mennonites learn how we belong to the land when we are not in community with those unlike ourselves, particularly when many of us live in the Mennonite ghettos and rural areas? We need to hear more from Shearer and from the Hispanics, Native Americans and African-Americans among us. Help us isolated ones understand you with our hearts.—*Amy Spencer, Kalona, Iowa*

Refund challenge

I understand that the emphasis in the integrated Mennonite Church will be mission. This is as it should be. We Mennonites in the United States have an opportunity to demonstrate how committed we are to mission. Our government has agreed to refund $300 to $600 of the income tax we paid. My wife and I plan to give our refund to Mennonite Central Committee, and we would like to challenge U.S. Mennonites to also give their refunds to MCC or some other agency. I assume there are some among us who need the refund for living expenses, but the majority of us have comfortable living without using the refund.—*Paul Sieber, Champaign, Ill.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Back to community

A call for the Mennonite church to restore the waning distinctive of community in our congregations

by Tim Schultz

Rita Schmidt is probably the person most responsible for my becoming a Mennonite. In the mid-1960s, my parents moved our family from inner-city Buffalo, N.Y., to what was to us the "promised land" of Alden, a Buffalo suburb. My parents, having been raised Baptist, naturally sought out direction to the Baptist church in town when looking to locate a place of worship for the family. However, the Baptist church was experiencing division within, and my mother and father had the sense that a fresh start in a new town should not involve a church split.

Rita was the affable, godly woman who hung wallpaper at our little new home. In the course of conversation she invited my parents to her church, a Mennonite church. She said, "Come and visit; you'll like it."

Like it we did. We liked the simple white frame building and the dignity and holiness of the elders who sat up front. We were intrigued with the tradition of men sitting on one side of the sanctuary and women on the other. We marveled at the choir-like congregational singing.

But what we may have found most compelling about our new church was the Mennonite tradition—popular at the time—of going back and forth to each other's homes on Sundays following the worship service. It wasn't too long before we were even able to play the Mennonite game of tracing relations within the congregation. During these times of afternoon fellowship we got to know one another on a personal level. This unusual group of Christians warmly let my family into its fold. We were discovering firsthand what Mennonites were known for: community.

Community occurs when time and commitments are broken from their worldly grasp and restored as living offerings to God and the people of God.

Marilyn Nolt

Christian community, in its most meaningful dimension, still exists in many Mennonite congregations, no doubt, but there seems to be a growing need over the past couple decades for a return to it. We do not devote as much time to getting to know each other outside the official church program. Instead of spending time at each other's homes, we go out for a quick meal at a fast-food restaurant or watch a noisy football game. Could it be that modern Mennonites have bought into the cultural norms of individualism, privacy and, even more significant, busy-ness, and no longer find time to linger around one another's tables and living rooms?

In the book of Acts, we find a noticeable sense of community in the earliest days following Pentecost. The believers shared possessions, spent lots of time together in worship, partook of the Lord's Supper and praised God with thankful hearts. No surprise then that outsiders wanted to join them, so attractive was their experience. They were discovering community, and it was a nourishing and invigorating experience.

Community happens when believers take time to gather with one another to bask in the affirming grace of God. Community occurs when time and commitments are broken from their worldly grasp and restored as living offerings to God and the people of God. Often what we substitute for community is mere activity.

In our Mennonite literature and doctrine we include community as one of our primary beliefs and practices. But we would do well to examine whether community has continued to be a reality in our congregations or if it is becoming a relic of our faith.

In stark contrast to the rushed "How are you?" that we offer one another in passing on Sunday mornings, community for the early Anabaptists was at times a life-and-death reality. In their book *Praying With the Anabaptists*, Marlene Kropf and Eddy Hall write: "The distinguishing mark of the Anabaptists was their sincere love for each other and their willingness, if necessary, to give their lives for their sisters and brothers. Hunted and persecuted by civil and religious authorities, they trusted each other with their possessions and even their children. More than one martyr left children behind in the care of the congregation."

In our Mennonite literature and doctrine we include community as one of our primary beliefs and practices. And we should maintain this formal emphasis on community. But we would do well to examine whether community has continued to be a reality in our congregations or if it is becoming a relic of our faith.

How, as busy people, might we work at preserving community? Here are some modest and simple suggestions for consideration:

1. As individuals and families: Set aside times, perhaps on Sundays but not necessarily so, for spending a relaxed afternoon or evening with a couple, family or single person. Choose those you may not know as well. You might consider going to a quiet bookstore together or to a park and walking together for an extended period of time.

2. As congregations: Scale down the administrative and committee responsibilities and activities (those things that make us feel valid). Someone has said, "Busy-ness is a sign of barrenness." Make time for relationship-building activities such as informal fellowship evenings with no real agenda, game nights and more prayer and sharing times in the worship services. Follow up on prayer requests that are shared on Sunday mornings.

3. As area conferences: Encourage local interaction among congregations more than trying to maintain conferencewide togetherness. Just as it is difficult to have more than a few close friends, it is challenging to experience community with congregations many miles away. In my district we have been having joint services among a few of our Mennonite churches, and our gatherings have helped us feel connected to one another.

Marilyn Nolt

Could it be that modern Mennonites have bought into the cultural norms of individualism, privacy and, even more significant, busy-ness, and no longer find time to linger around one another's tables and living rooms?

When I think of Rita Schmidt and her invitation to our family back in the 1960s, I ask myself, Are our churches the kind of places these days where outsiders can find community and acceptance?

As churches, let us ask ourselves these kinds of questions from time to time: Who in my fellowship have I gotten to know lately? Do we truly anticipate coming together again on Sunday mornings? Do we belong? Are we just another church providing more programs and religion, or are we a community?

Tim Schultz is pastor of Harris Hill Mennonite Church in Buffalo, N.Y.

Your job
curse, career or calling?

We can honor God in the workplace.

by Stephen Lim

Monday's alarm signals another week of work. Do you eagerly jump out of bed or roll over with a groan? Suppose the awards team from Publisher's Clearing House Sweepstakes knocks at your door and announces that you've won $200,000 a year for life. Will you keep going to work? It depends on whether you consider your job a curse, a career or a calling.

Your job as a curse: A Gallup survey found that 34 percent of those ages 18 to 29 would quit their jobs if they could. Among those ages 30 to 49, 44 percent would resign. These individuals see their work as a necessary evil to support themselves and their families, but they live for 5 p.m. and the weekend.

Work was not meant to be a curse but a gift. Besides work meeting our needs, God intended it to provide a creative, satisfying way for us to use our abilities. But work often brings boredom, stress and exploitation.

Lack of job security adds anxiety. A woman received a watch from her company for 20 years of service. A few weeks later, the company replaced her with an entry-level person at lower pay. In the United States nearly half of all workers are hired on a contingent basis—meaning no benefits or assurance of continued employment. No wonder *Time* magazine calls our era "the age of the disposable worker."

Seeing our job as God's calling dignifies it. The work itself may still be menial and wearisome, but through our attitudes and actions we honor God.

Unfortunately, when we view work negatively, a large portion of our lives loses significance. We do not sense the dignity of work or see any connection between it and Christian faith.

Your job as a career: Others embrace their jobs as part of a career that provides what they want in life. Benefits include increasing possessions, financial security and status. Most importantly, through their careers they can achieve the success by which they define their self-worth. This view encourages a positive attitude toward our jobs. The more we give to our work, the more fulfillment we gain.

But this outlook also holds dangers. First, to achieve the good life we are tempted to let our careers control us. They can determine where we live, when we move, how many hours we work and how much time we give to family and to serving God. This usurps God's lordship of our lives.

Mike Holmgren served as an assistant coach for San Francisco's football team. After the 49ers won the Super Bowl, two other teams offered him a head coaching position. Since his twin daughters were juniors in high school, he felt it unwise to uproot his family. Though he did not know when another opportunity would arise, he chose to stay put for two more years. As a Christian, he did not want career success to control his decisions.

Another danger of careerism is unbalanced living and the neglect of our families or personal and spiritual nurture. Best-selling business author Tom Peters writes: "We are frequently asked if it is possible to have it all—a full and satisfying personal life and a full and satisfying, hard-working professional one. Our answer is no. The price of excellence is time, energy, attention and focus."

Most people view their jobs as either a curse or a career. Believers have a better option.

Your job as calling: When we serve God, we do not work just to make a living or primarily to achieve success. Instead, our jobs become arenas for honoring God. Seeing our job as God's calling dignifies it. The work itself may still be menial and wearisome, but through our attitudes and actions we honor God.

Excellence: We're underpaid and unappreciated, and the job has no future. Should we just get by with the least effort? Not as Christians. Whatever we do, we offer it as an act of worship to God, who is worthy of our best. The apostle Paul instructs, "Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters. ... You serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:23-24 NRSV).

Integrity: Dave worked as an electronics technician for a company that repaired equip-

Skjold Photographs—for illustration only

ment for other businesses. He tested equipment for accuracy before returning it to customers. One day his supervisor told him, "We're running behind schedule. Why don't you just sign off on this one, so we can get to other projects." As a Christian, Dave declined.

In a poll by *Industry Week* magazine, 25 percent of workers said that during the previous year their supervisors had asked them to do something dishonest. Of these, 64 percent felt that the alternative was to lose their job.

As employees we also face the common temptations to stretch breaks, use company time to handle personal business and call in sick when we're not. Or we may embellish the facts to make a sale.

Jesus tells us, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16 NRSV). In the work world, maintaining integrity is difficult. It requires spiritual commitment, prayer, the support and counsel of other believers and sometimes the sacrifice of a raise, promotion or even the job itself.

Compassion: Regardless of what we do, our work can make a difference in the lives of others. Part of our income should be devoted to helping the materially and spiritually needy. In contrast to unethical acquisitions, the Bible instructs each Christian to do honest work "so as to have something to share with the needy" (Ephesians 4:28).

Loving our neighbor: The neighbors that God calls us to love (Matthew 22:39) include those who occupy the desks or work spaces around us. We bless them with a friendly and thoughtful spirit. In turbulent times calm and good cheer ease the tension. For those with problems, we can offer encouragement, a listening ear and practical help.

Supervisors enrich the job environment by varying the tasks assigned, creating a caring, affirming atmosphere and providing growth opportunities. When it is practical, they invite employee participation in decisions.

Sharing the good news: Jacques Ellul writes, "The only place theological truth reaches the world is through action of the laypeople in the marketplace." Because of the time we spend there, work is the most strategic sphere for relating with unbelievers. Without infringing on company time, through caring relationships we discover others' needs—whether for peace of mind, fulfillment, healing for brokenness or eternal life. We can share how Jesus meets these needs.

In a fallen world, no job satisfies completely. Ours may be mostly fulfilling or only minimally so. When we sense God's calling, it doesn't matter. For through our jobs we honor God and accomplish his purpose.

The only place theological truth reaches the world is through action of the laypeople in the marketplace.

—Jacques Ellul

Stephen Lim is a free-lance writer in San Francisco.

Executed man's family gets MBM support

Staff member was pastor to relatives of Juan Raul Garza

TERRE HAUTE, Ind.—When convicted murderer Juan Raul Garza became the second man to be executed by the U.S. federal government since 1963, a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) staff member was present to comfort Garza's family members.

Dale Bauman, a consultant for MBM's department of Evangelism and Church Development in Elkhart, Ind., has worked closely with Garza's former parents-in-law, Conrado and Esther Hinojosa, who minister along the Texas-Mexico border. Conrado is pastor of Good News Mennonite Church in San Juan, Texas, and an MBM urban ministry director.

As a church, we've got to wake up. This is not a way to bring peace. This is not a way to bring justice.

—Dale Bauman

Bauman flew to Terre Haute to serve as pastor for the family of Garza, who died by lethal injection on Tuesday, June 19, at 7:09 a.m. in the same federal facility where Timothy McVeigh was executed eight days earlier.

Elizabeth Garza, Hinojosa's daughter and Juan's former wife, was already in Terre Haute when Bauman arrived Sunday, June 17. "I was feeling hopeless," Bauman says. "I was wondering, What can I do or be in this instance? How can I bring the presence of Jesus into this situation?

"It feels good to work for an organization that cares, though. I was happy to be MBM's representative and to be able to show Juan's family that the Mennonite Church is walking with them."

Although the Garzas divorced in 1995, Elizabeth supported Juan with daily phone calls and periodic visits. "I do it because I love him and because he is the father of our children," she says.

Garza, 44, was convicted in August 1993 in Brownsville, Texas, for killing one man and ordering two other murders during his involvement as the leader of a South Texas marijuana-smuggling ring. Garza admitted to the killings. During his incarceration, he became a Christian and repeatedly expressed remorse for his actions.

At Elizabeth Garza's suggestion, Bauman offered diversions for the children: the Garzas' son, Juan Jr., age 12, and daughter, Lizann, age 10, plus a 6-year-old relative. The foursome went to a restaurant, then spent the rest of Sunday evening and Monday in malls and watching a comedy movie.

"They are wonderful, vibrant kids and I just wanted to help them kick back and relax," Bauman says. "The day before they had gone through the trauma of being interviewed by the TV networks."

The Hinojosas arrived in Terre Haute Monday afternoon. They started their 26-hour drive north on Sunday after Esther finished preaching a Father's Day message. More family members came from Archbold, Ohio, including Esther's brother David Tijerina, who is pastor at Good Shepherd Mennonite Church in Archbold.

At about 9 p.m. on Monday, Garza's lawyer announced that all appeals had failed and the execution would take place the next morning.

Since Garza requested that his family not witness his execution, Bauman took the Hinojosas and their Archbold relatives to breakfast on Tuesday morning. The children slept in, and Elizabeth was at a nearby Catholic center, St. Mary's of the Woods, with Garza's daughter from his first marriage.

The Sisters of Providence, who administer the center, helped to lead Garza to faith while he was in prison. A priest met with Garza shortly before the lethal injection was administered. Afterward, the priest told Elizabeth that Garza again expressed remorse for the lives he had taken and that he was ready to die.

"The priest's message that Juan Sr. had died peacefully comforted Elizabeth and the rest of the family," Bauman says. "Conrado and Esther told me that they had seen a change in Juan's life since he began walking with Jesus."

Elizabeth and her parents thanked Bauman for being their pastor and asked him to convey their gratitude to MBM and the broader Mennonite church for their support.

"We are at peace because of so many prayers on our behalf," Esther says. "Our tiredness is gone, and we have strength to go on."

Garza's funeral was held June 21 in Brownsville.

"We've got to find some way of stopping this madness," Bauman says. "When I was with the kids, the words of Jesus kept ringing in my head, 'Forgive each other 70 times seven.' As a church, we've got to wake up. This is not a way to bring peace. This is not a way to bring justice"—*MBM News Service*

TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • July 2001 • Issue 7

Mission? Possible

Pacific Southwest Conference points the way for MC USA

"Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare, you will find welfare."

The Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference originated with immigrants, its oldest congregations begun by German-speaking Mennonites from the eastern U.S. and Russia. They founded their own congregations, "seeking the welfare" of their communities as they grew. In many ways, today not much has changed.

Chuwang and Grace Pam of the Los Angeles Faith Chapel stand in front of a home they will convert into a homeless shelter. Chuwang, a Nigerian, also works for the Center for Anabaptist Leadership (CAL)

"Over the last 20 years as immigration in North America has shifted from Ellis Island to Los Angeles, the world has come to Pacific Southwest," say southern California area minister Jeff Wright. "God is pushing us even beyond our conference borders of Arizona and California."

A year ago, PSMC committed itself to creating new strategies for helping congregations become energized and equipped for mission in their communities. A Conference Mission Team has presented a vision for every congregation to become a house of prayer, a community ministry and a leadership "farm system." The goal is for every congregation to see itself as a mission agency in its community.

Wright suggests that mission has more to do with relationships than geography. That attitude has helped the conference grow in some unusual directions. Links are being made between Indonesian churches in southern California and Indonesia and Australia; between West African churches in Los Angeles and Nigeria; and between Hispanic congregations in the Southwest and communities in Mexico.

Wright believes these relationships will eventually transform the conference. "It's an incredible privilege to sit back and watch it happen, to watch God at work," he says. "We are going to carve out a new Mennonite identity in this conference, just as our forbears did 100 years ago when they came west."

Nashville 2001

Jeff Wright and other staff of the Center for Anabaptist Leadership will present an all-day workshop at Nashville 2001. "Foundations for Church Planting: Methods from the Pacific Southwest" will cover issues such as leadership-based church planting strategies, the priority of prayer, the power of bivocational teams and creating leadership farm systems.

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imagine

. . . if your church's members share more with their neighbors than a privacy fence

and the good news of Jesus Christ spreads across the yard and around the world.

Mennonite Church USA

Mennonite Church USA

TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • July 2001
Page one – Tony Siemens; Page four – Jim L. Bowman

Printed in U.S.A.

"Firstfruits Giving" curriculum now available for congregational use

A three-lesson curriculum on "firstfruits giving" and the new funding system for Mennonite Church USA is now available for use in your congregation.

"Transformation into a new denomination brings an opportunity to revisit how ministry is funded and to be certain we honor scriptural principles," says Mark Vincent, former Giving Project director, who wrote the curriculum *Firstfruits Giving: Funding Our Vision Together* as part of his work with the Funding Implementation Team of MC USA.

The three lessons are designed to introduce households and congregations to the new funding system. Lesson one begins with the scriptural roots of a firstfruits funding system. Lesson two introduces participants to the system itself through a worship experience, and lesson three invites a vision for cultivating generous people.

A bibliography lists additional resources. A look at giving patterns among Mennonites since the early 1900s and a brief review of delegate actions regarding the denominational transformation process are also included.

The 24-page curriculum can be photocopied for use by Sunday school teachers, small group leaders and others in your congregation. Each of the three lessons includes a page to photocopy for all participants in the study.

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**Firstfruits Giving:
Funding Our Vision
Together**

by Mark L. Vincent

You can find *Firstfruits Giving: Funding Our Vision Together* on the Mennonite Church USA website at www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org or you can order a sample copy by contacting Kathryn Rodgers at KRodgers@MennoniteUSA.org (219 294-7131).

Keeping track of the "black-eyed Susans"

Last summer the black-eyed Susans took over my perennial garden. Crowding out the delphiniums and even the Russian sage, this abundant flower destroyed my garden's beauty and harmony by not leaving room for other equally attractive and useful plants. Guided by a map I had made earlier, I spent many hours this spring pulling up dozens of the offenders, transplanting other plants and renewing the original vision of the garden.

After 18 years of working on the staff of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, I have a vivid impression of the incredible energy and creativity of congregational life within our denomination. Dedicated to Christ and busily engaged in church as well as community ministries, Mennonites are eager to be the best disciples we can be. As hardy and prolific as a crop of black-Eyed Susans, we make our churches into lively hubs of activity.

I've also seen how fragmenting our energetic outbursts can be. Our bent toward keeping busy can make us vulnerable to the tyranny of a ceaseless round of activity unconnected to an overarching vision of God's dream for the church. When that happens, our congregations become tired, listless and even depressed.

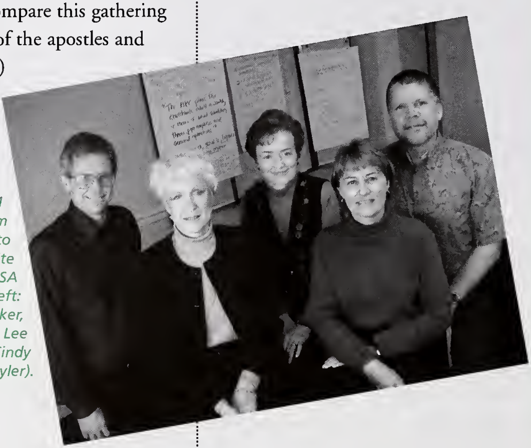
The most important task of the new Office of Congregational Life is keeping track of a holistic vision of the church. In its interaction with other offices of the Executive Board and with the church, this office will speak on behalf of a coherent, integrated vision for healthy congregational life. We'll do our best to help keep the church in tune with what God's Spirit is doing in the world – something beautiful indeed.

Marlene Kropf will become the director of the Office of Congregational Life for the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA.

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us…

The Nashville 2001 Assembly is the culmination of a number of joint MC and GC gatherings over the past 18 years since Bethlehem 83. Step by step, delegates have made decisions in previous meetings that have brought us to this place as we continue to seek God's desire for us.

Could we compare this gathering to the assembly of the apostles and elders (Acts 15:6) long ago in Jerusalem?



The Nashville 2001 staff team welcomes you to the Mennonite Church USA Assembly (from left: Marvin Schmucker, Roma Eicher, Lee Schmucker, Cindy Snider and Ron Byler).

Wouldn't we desire something similar to the "minutes" of their meeting (a letter sent to the church at Antioch). It states without apology, *"For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us…"* (Acts 15:28). I believe an equal power and joy is available to us from the same Spirit.

Like the assembly in Jerusalem, the Nashville Assembly will include impassioned speeches and quotations from scripture. It will conclude similarly, I believe, with statements that wed our discernment with the wisdom of God's Spirit.

We love the close fellowship and discernment found in our congregations. But when the church gathers from near and far in large assemblies, the meeting – in its worship, prayer and discernment – takes on a similarity to what we experience in our own congregations. For a fleeting moment we will become the Nashville congregation, judged not by our numbers or the length of our deliberations, but by our reception to the Spirit's prompting.

May God bless the young and old who converge on Nashville, and make them a blessing!

James Schrag

Jim Schrag
Executive Director designate
Mennonite Church USA

In Christ, Held Together Meditating on Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,

What a wonderful reminder that we are people of God, that God loves us and chooses that we be God's people. I wonder if we really understand this?

Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.

This wardrobe is always in season. I wonder if we are strong enough in these five qualities to be ready for any situation?

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other, just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

As in the Lord's Prayer, we are reminded to forgive, just as God forgives us. I wonder if Paul heard Peter quote Jesus about forgiving 70 times seven?

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

This multipurpose, multicolor garment goes with everything. I wonder if we wear love at all times?

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Let's be careful not to be pressed into society's cookie-cutter impression of peace. I wonder if every day is Thanksgiving Day?

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

Worship is a core component of our community of faith. I wonder if we slide into spiritual poverty when we restrict space in our lives for Christ's word?

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

All of us are invited to use this text as a prayer focus and challenged to memorize the verses. I wonder what will happen as we accept this challenging invitation and consider the issues of formation of Mennonite Church USA?

(from church newsletter)
Norma J. Johnson, associate pastor
Bethel College Mennonite Church
Newton, Kan.

Mennonite
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Amid Southern Africa's strife, MCC worker wants to grow regional 'sustainable peace ecosystem'

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—When Carl Stauffer arrived in South Africa to be a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) peace worker, he brought along his experience with a victim-offender reconciliation program in Richmond, Va.

That was seven years ago. Today Stauffer says his work is undergoing a change as he has been influenced by the tools of traditional African mediation, which tends to be communal and consensus-building. As a result, he now wants to create a "sustainable peace ecosystem" for Southern Africa.

"We need to unearth indigenous practices and find methods that work in Africa," Stauffer says.

He has gone from doing conflict mediation under the auspices of a local organization in South Africa to developing a regional peace network.

"While there is relative calm in about half the countries—Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique and Malawi—there remain serious concerns in Angola and Zimbabwe and clear warning signals in Zambia and Swaziland," Stauffer says. "Keeping our fingers on the pulse of these conflicts is of critical importance as we continue to encourage and undergird peace processes in the region."

To this end, Stauffer has traveled the past year as a consultant and mediation trainer to Angola, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia and Guinea (to work with refugees of Sierra Leone's civil war), as well as within South Africa.

Zambia is the location of a major resource for peace education, the African Peacebuilding Institute at the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Kitwe. A partnership of Mindolo, MCC and Eastern Mennonite University, the API draws much of its inspiration from EMU's Summer Peacebuilding Institute, which annually brings participants from across the globe for studies at the Harrisonburg, Va., school.

"A main purpose of the API is cross-pollination, an exchange of ideas among the countries—seven or eight in 2000—that are represented at the training," Stauffer says. "It helps to see conflicts with new eyes and look at a long-term framework for peace-building.

"There's a ripple effect in at least four layers. There is the enrichment and transformation of the individuals. They'll affect their immediate social relationships, then go out to their workplaces and higher levels in the nation, even the government. Finally, there will be an effect in the region."

Stauffer and his wife, Carolyn, joined MCC in 1994 on the heels of the election that brought Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress (ANC) to power. When Stauffer began, he was seconded to Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, an ecumenical Christian community and ministry center in Johannesburg. Stauffer helped create Wilgespruit's Survivor-Offender Mediation program, which brings together survivors and offenders of the violence of South Africa's apartheid era.

In doing so, Stauffer learned of the values of native mediation methods. "There are many restorative practices, and there is great willingness to forgive," he says.

He also saw his own mediation efforts shift from bringing one offender and one victim together to working with groups, families, even whole communities. Through his Wilgespruit work, he helped implement community policing. Stauffer says one of the ANC government's first major pieces of legislation—community policing—is relationship-building, bringing together police and community to talk and learn how to hold each other accountable.

The change in Stauffer's work fits with MCC's new emphasis in Africa of looking beyond political boundaries. "MCC is now looking at 'priority areas' rather than countries," Stauffer says. "It's meant MCC looking at the whole region and asking, How is the work of MCC and local partners interrelated and how can we resource each other?"

—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Mennonite Central Committee worker Carl Stauffer (right) meets with (left to right) Kindiza Nqubeni, Boitemelo Kekana and Amanda Dissell of the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation in Johannesburg, South Africa. Stauffer serves as a consultant to the center as part of his peace work in Southern Africa.

Support grows for new church

As a decision nears for finalizing the creation of Mennonite Church USA, two more area conferences have overwhelmingly voted to be part of the new denomination.

Meeting June 21-24 in Milford, Neb., in its first conference assembly, Central Plains Conference decided with only one dissenting vote to become a charter member of Mennonite Church USA. The conference was formed a year ago by merging Iowa-Nebraska Conference and Northern District Conference.

Indiana-Michigan Conference has also voted to become a Mennonite Church USA charter member. Delegates approved the measure by a 92 percent vote at their annual meeting June 21-24 in South Bend, Ind.

Eight Mennonite Church area conferences have now voted to join Mennonite Church USA. MC and General Conference Mennonite Church delegates are meeting in Nashville, Tenn., July 2-7, where they are expected to take action on the creation of the new denomination.

On Appalachian Trail, mission agency worker finds peace and insight for merger journey

Courtesy photo

When Mennonite Board of Missions worker David Paulovich hiked the Appalachian Trail this spring, he took the nickname of Pilgrim because the venture was a personal search for him.

GOSHEN, Ind.—Forming Mennonite Church USA and its institutions can be a real bear. Just ask David Paulovich.

Paulovich, personnel counselor and recruitment coordinator for Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), wanted some time to ponder his role in a new mission agency. He decided to spend his time thinking by hiking part of the Appalachian Trail, which covers 2,617 miles between Springer Mountain, Ga., and Mount Katadin, Maine.

Paulovich started from Springer Mountain on April 26. About 2 a.m. that first night, he heard scratching and sniffing outside his tent. It was a bear, who climbed a tree and got Paulovich's bag with five or six days of food. He spent the next two days and 32 miles sustained by a jar of peanut butter the bear left until Paulovich could buy more supplies.

While he found food for his physical body, Paulovich also discovered inner nourishment. He had planned to hike for 28 days. But 22 days and 268 miles after he set out, Paulovich left the trail at Davenport Gap, N.C., with a sense of peace about his role in the new mission agency.

One lesson Paulovich learned from the trail was whatever he picked up he had to carry on his back. "Make sure you evaluate what you pick up," he says.

Paulovich dealt with his anxieties, such as being alone or losing things. He also hiked treacherous parts of the trail, despite his fear of heights.

And he found beauty. "I saw violets almost every day of the hike," Paulovich says. "I began to look for violets."

Most Appalachian Trail hikers use nicknames, which they use in the sign-in books at each shelter. There was X, Flying Bear, Tiger Cakes and Supersonic Fat Burner. Paulovich chose a moniker that reflected his personal search. "I was Pilgrim," he says.

This wasn't his first venture on the Appalachian Trail. Growing up in southeastern Pennsylvania, Paulovich, now 60, earned a Boy Scout badge by hiking 110 miles of the trail.

He prepared for his latest trek by walking near his Goshen home and carrying his 50-pound backpack up and down the eight flights of stairs in the Elkhart building where MBM is headquartered.

In addition to the bear, the trail brought other surprises. Paulovich didn't expect companions on his journey. But he encountered three men with whom he formed a bond, including two Germans who had come to the United States to walk the famous trail.

"The most exciting thing about the trail [were] the personalities that walked together," Paulovich says.

The quartet traded food and stories as they hiked together for 164 miles. And the men discussed Christianity. "They knew I was a counselor, and they could come and talk about deeper things," Paulovich says.

One of the hikers didn't want to hear about God. Paulovich tried not to offend him but also told him: "I believe so strongly. My faith in Jesus Christ is so important to me because it brought light into my life."

As Paulovich walked, he also prayed for the 25 or 30 people who contributed for each mile he hiked to a leadership fund for India's Bihar Mennonite Church. His wife, Cheryl, was born in India, and the couple encouraged donations to the fund instead of gifts when they married 28 years ago.

Paulovich is back at work now, surrounded by the transformation of denominations and mission agencies. His feet are mostly healed, he says, but he's still eating leftover trail food, including beef jerky and an energy drink of dried milk, Tang and brewer's yeast. Because of his interactions on the trail, Paulovich is doing a lot of reading on pastoral care and personal growth. He says he recently read that surrendering self is the first step in growth and remembered that he had to surrender to what the trail brought.—*Marshall V. King*

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Unfamiliar work subject of MCC annual meeting

AKRON, Pa.—Earthquakes. Famine. Hurricanes. Floods. While such emergencies tend to get the most attention among Mennonite Central Committee's constituency, MCC spends 53 percent of its international program budget on quiet work called capacity-building.

An unfamiliar term, capacity-building is at the heart of MCC philosophy, noted members of the MCC board during their annual meeting June 15-16, held at MCC headquarters in Akron for the first time in the organization's 81-year history. The meeting opened with video-conveyed greetings from an Indian colleague, who illustrated what capacity-building is and why it is critical.

J.K. Michael, the recently retired executive director of Churches Auxiliary for Social Action in India, thanked MCC for its support since CASA began more than 24 years ago. In the beginning, he noted, CASA was addressing 16 or 17 natural disasters in any given year; CASA now handles 65 to 70 disasters annually.

"It's not that emergencies have increased," Michael said, "but our ability to respond has increased."

Capacity-building is enhancing people's ability to address their own needs. It represents "a major shift from the assumption that Western technology and money and goodwill and Christian compassion can fix the problems of the world," said international program director Edgar Metzler. "There is a growing recognition that what really matters is not what MCC workers can accomplish on their own but how we can work alongside others, and often under others, so that the strength in local communities is released and nurtured."

One of the organizations MCC hopes to continue to help build is Mennonite World Conference. MCC has promised $25,000 in matching grants this year and next to aid MWC as it plans for coming years. Future cooperation could include MWC representation on MCC's board.

The weekend also featured the dedication of the Welcoming Place, MCC's meeting and orientation center, including housing for as many as 44 people. Each of the facility's four structures represents a region of the world—Asia, Africa, Middle East/Europe and the Americas—and is decorated with designs and artifacts from its corresponding region.

The design of the Welcoming Place is intended to show respect, said facilities committee member Paul Quiring, "respect for the cultures and places MCC has been and where it is going in the future."

In other business, the MCC board took action to legally separate MCC U.S. from MCC, a move intended to simplify decisions about national programs. The incorporation of MCC U.S., which is scheduled to take effect April 1, 2002, will make the organization parallel to MCC Canada.

"We do work on behalf of MCC's international programs," said MCC U.S. board chair Harriet Sider Bicksler, "but there are significant things going on in the U.S."—*Cathleen Hockman-Wert for Meetinghouse*

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this date in Mennonite history

July 3, 1875—Arsonists set fire to the Wadsworth (Ohio) Institute, the first U.S. Mennonite school of higher education, in an unsuccessful attempt to destroy it.

Afghanistan getting assistance from MCC

AKRON, Pa.—Already in crisis due to two decades of war, Afghanistan is desperate for food and water following three years of inadequate rainfall. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is responding with $474,000 for wheat for tuberculosis patients and women.

Most of the tuberculosis patients have contracted the disease due to malnourishment and weak immune systems. Patients are often unemployed and unable to pay for food or treatment. The MCC wheat will be administered through Medair, an international aid agency that also supplies free medications.

Wheat will also be given to Afghan widows and their families. Laws passed by the country's Taliban government restrict women from holding paying jobs in most parts of Afghanistan. MCC's aid will be distributed by the relief and development organization CARE International.—*MCC News Service*

New MDS initiative focuses on cultural diversity

APACHE, Okla.—Combining educational curriculum with repairing flood-damaged homes, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) held its first Cultural Diversity Work Week June 4-7 in Apache.

Fourteen volunteers from Parkview Mennonite Brethren Church in Hillsboro, Kan., spent their mornings repairing homes and their afternoons learning about the local Native American history and culture.

"We don't often look at things from the Native American perspective," says Karla Amstutz, MDS Apache project director. "Since MDS works in so many different areas, it is important that we take these opportunities to understand other cultures and broaden our own perspectives."

Activities included touring the Comanche Nation Headquarters in Medicine Park, Okla., and a presentation about the tribe, a visit to the grave of Geronimo at Fort Sill, and devotions in a tepee.—*MDS News Service*

Pa. school celebrates first eighth-grade class

LANCASTER, Pa.—Lancaster Mennonite Middle School celebrated the completion of its first eighth-grade class as 32 students were recognized at a May 31 ceremony for families and faculty.

Principal Richard Thomas thanked the students for "providing positive leadership to launch [the middle school] into such a successful first year."

The middle school was added last fall with 95 students in grades six through eight, combining with Lancaster Mennonite High School for a total campus enrollment of 870.

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RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 3-18)
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From PENNSYLVANIA to ONTARIO: Trail of the Conestoga (October 24-29)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL (October 26 - November 8)

2002 TOURS
SERVICE TOUR in SUNNY JAMAICA (January 25 - February 3)
AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 8-28)
HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
JORDAN, ISRAEL, VIENNA and BUDAPEST (February 15-28)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL/PALESTINE (April 5-18)
PARAGUAY, BOLIVIA and PERU (April 6-22)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA and Its FJORDS (June 17 - July 1)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 19 - July 1)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 12-29)
MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)
EASTERN CANADA (August 2-12)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (August 12-26)
SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)
VIETNAM (November 8-25)

2003 TOURS
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE in AFRICA (August)

Workers

Janzen, Susan, was ordained April 21 as pastor at New Hope Mennonite Church, Omaha, Neb.
Sensenig, Jennifer Davis, was ordained April 1 as pastor at Cedar Falls (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Births

Farran, Jonah Zachary, April 17, to Patrick and Stacey (Graber) Farran, Prairie View, Ill.
Janzen, Emma Ruth, May 25, to Monica (Swartzentruber) and Steve Janzen, Harrisonburg, Va.
Miller, Harlee Danielle, May 28, to Ann (Detweiler) and Dwight Miller, Goshen, Ind.
Roth, Natalie, May 21, to Karla Smucker and Wynn Roth, Archbold, Ohio.
Thrapp, Tanner Travis, May 22, to Jennifer (French) and Travis Thrapp, Washington, Iowa.
Voth, Grace Elizabeth, May 14, to Amy (Debelak) and Philip J. Voth, Inola, Okla.

Marriages

Brummel/Scott: Mark Brummel, Genoa, Ill., and Janel Scott, Washington, Ill., May 26 at DeKalb (Ill.) Wesleyan Church.
Hofer/Scott: Ellen Hofer, Milwaukee, and Steven Scott, Milwaukee, May 18 at Our Lady of Good Hope Church, Milwaukee.
Maggio/Wireman: Melissa Maggio, Washington, Ill., and James Wireman, Washington, May 19 at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, Morton, Ill.
Seachris/Snyder: Amanda Seachris, Buhler, Kan., and Toby Snyder, Hutchinson, Kan., May 26 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Counts, Stewart V., 93, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 5. Survivors: stepsons David Rothwell, Daniel Rothwell, John Rothwell; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 8 at Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Ewert, Elmer H., 83, Freeman, S.D., died May 20 of a stroke. Spouse: Marie Franz Ewert. Parents: Peter S. and Susanna Berg Ewert (deceased). Other survivors: children Brenda Garman, Sheryl; one grandchild. Funeral: May 24 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.
Good, Esther Brunk, 87, Middlebury, Ind., died June 6. Spouse: Merlin Good. Parents: Gabriel and Dora Mosier Brunk (deceased). Other survivors: children Edwin, Ruby Reed, Twila Miller, Evelyn Kurtz, Elnora Yoder; 16 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 10 at Pike Mennonite Church, Elida, Ohio.
Longenecker, Anna Ruth Bair, 76, Elizabethtown, Pa., died June 7 of cancer. Spouse: Phares B. Longenecker (deceased). Parents: H. Landis and Elizabeth Bair (deceased). Survivors: children Ava Lee Martin, Dianne Stover, Audrey Bender, Ferne Miller, Duane; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: June 13 at Bossler Mennonite Church, Elizabethtown.
Marner, Edith J., 82, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died June 5. Spouse: (1st) Lee Troyer (deceased); (2nd) Willard Marner (deceased). Parents: Jonathan and Nora Troyer Troyer (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Dean Troyer, Paul Dean Marner, Wallace Marner, Shirley Brown, Wilma Bender, Shirley Lehman, Helen Erb, Kathryn Swartzentruber; numerous stepgrandchildren and step-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 16 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.
Miller, Anne E. Fisher, 68, Orrville, Ohio, died June 8 of cancer. Spouse: Crist Miller. Parents: Emmanuel J. and Mary J. Miller Fisher (deceased). Other survivors: children William, Melvin, Linda Beachy, Kathy Crouse, Deb Horst; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville.
Nunemaker, Weldon O., 86, Sterling, Ill., died June 5. Spouse: Marion Eigsti Nunemaker. Parents: Enos and Ada Book Nunemaker (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Shank, Dale; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 11 at Schilling Funeral Home, Sterling.
Petri, Hans Jr., 77, Wood Dale, Ill., died June 6 of pulmonary fibrosis. Spouse: Edith Franz Petri. Parents: Anna and Hans Petri (deceased). Other survivors: children Friedrich, Annette Anderle; one grandchild. Funeral: June 9 at Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church.
Rempel, Hannah Miller, 86, Chouteau, Okla., died April 4 of heart failure. Spouse: Paul Rempel (deceased). Parents: Adolph and Mary Golbek Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Shirley Shellhorn, Eunice Weast, Laura Jean Barkman, Charles; 12 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; nine great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.
Shenk, Ezra, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 31. Spouse: Pauline Shenk (deceased). Survivors: children Eleanor Lynch, Ruth, Nora Schenk, Gladys Wyse, Carl; six grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.
Steckly, Ronald, 56, Tavistock, Ont., died May 30 of cancer. Spouse: Rose Steckly (deceased). Parents: Ernest and Marcella Steckly. Other survivors: children Rochelle, Ryan. Funeral: June 3 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.
Stoltzfus, Elsie Smoker, 68, Gordonville, Pa., died May 12 of cancer. Spouse: Reuben Stoltzfus. Parents: Isaac Z. and Emma K. Fisher Smoker (deceased). Other survivors: children I. Richard, Wayne, Larry, Timothy, Phyllis Stoltzfus Martin, Emma Stoltzfus Kesterson, Ruby Stoltzfus Witherspoon; 21 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Burial: May 16 at Leacock Township, Pa.
Vansickle, Cecil, 91, Burrton, Kan., died June 4. Spouse: Revae Vansickle (deceased). No services.
Zimmerman, Ruth, 82, Lititz, Pa., died June 9 of natural causes. Parents: Mahlon M. and Esther Mae Nolt Zimmerman (deceased). Burial: June 13 at Ephrata, Pa.

Correction: In David Wenger's obituary (June 12 issue), survivors should include son Dale.

Nashville 2001
news
everyday

Even if you won't be attending the Nashville convention, you'll be able to find out what happened by visiting *The Mennonite*'s website for daily photos and news updates.

Beginning July 3, log-on to **themennonite.org** to keep informed about important Nashville 2001 decisions.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, Newton, Kan., seeks full-time, salaried ***manager*** for well-established store. For information, contact Donovan Bachman, 620-327-4601; Bill Mason, 620-327-4157; or Melanie Mueller, 316-835-2126.

- **Gulfhaven Mennonite Church**, Gulfport, Miss., ***80th anniversary celebration:*** "Praising God & Moving On." Guest speaker: Palmer Becker. Mark your calendars for Sept. 7-9, 2001. Information: 228-328-0045; <conradpr@juno.com>.

- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible.

  For further information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; email <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Turpin Mennonite Church**, Turpin, Okla., is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Applicant would have the opportunity to minister to a congregation of varied ages and denominational backgrounds.

  Contact Shirley Eggers at 580-259-6457 or Alan Hodges at 580-778-3315.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for ***middle school teachers*** in English, social studies, science (middle school or elementary cert. preferred).

  Contact us for details: Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email <tgb@hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>; web <www.hms.pvt.k12.pa.us>.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a rapidly growing retirement community in Lancaster County, Pa., seeks a ***director of fund development/public relations***. This individual is responsible for the growth and development of board-approved fund-raising campaigns.

  Send inquiries to Human Resources, 433 S. Kinzer Ave., New Holland, PA 17557; 717-355-6039.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a Mennonite-affiliated retirement community, seeks a visionary ***CEO*** with strong financial acumen and operational experience to lead its new and rapidly growing campus in southeast Pennsylvania. Located at New Holland in historic Lancaster County, GSV provides independent living and assisted living services to over 500 residents. Construction is under way to add health-care beds, dementia programming and a community center. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive retirement community experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <KirkStiffney@aol.com>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for two part-time positions teaching ***K-8 Spanish*** and ***junior high language arts*** (these could be combined to create a full-time position). Lake Center is a K-8 school of 380 students in the Akron/Canton area.

  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Edmonton, Alberta, is looking for a full-time ***pastor***. We are a growing, multigenerational congregation of 200+ members and adherents. Our congregation is committed to Mennonite-Anabaptist faith beliefs, celebrates diversity and variety in worship, includes music as a significant aspect of worship life and is committed to area and national conference affiliations.

  For further information, or to apply for this position, please contact Adela Wedler, 1903-111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>

- **Drift Creek Conference and Retreat Center**, on the beautiful Oregon coast, Lincoln City, seeks an ***administrative director or co-administrators***. Drift Creek Camp is located in the Oregon Coast Range Mountains, 13 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Full-time, year-round position, beginning Jan. 1, 2002. Responsible for administration, program planning, development, staff and volunteer coordination. Prior related experience desired.

  For additional information and application materials, contact Gwen Peachy, 2713 NW Arnold Way, Corvallis, OR 97330; 541-754-6336; <gpeachey@yahoo.com>.

- **Huber Mennonite Church**, New Carlisle, Ohio, seeks services of a ***pastor*** committed to serving faithfully according to God's Word. Small congregation of 75 in recently expanded facility with anticipation of growth through outreach.

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  Interested people should contact Mark Garis, Board Chair, 504 Swartley Rd., Hatfield, PA 19440; 215-822-9795; <markgaris@aol.com>.

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M M A

Stories of protest about short-term mission

by Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas: Lupe Aguilar, moderator; Maggie De Leon, congregational life; Lorraine Plett, treasurer; Leona Diener, secretary; Conrado Hinojosa, district overseer; Israel Hernandez, leadership commission; Felipe Hinojosa; Andre Zook

As she abandoned a youth group who had been degrading her beloved Mexico all day long, Carmen shouted, "I never want to work with 'gringos' [whites] again."

Carmen, who had been part of the educational process for this youth group, had to hear questions and comments such as these: Why is Mexico so dirty? Why does everyone in Mexico have old, dirty cars? Everyone in Goshen [Ind.] has new, pretty cars. I'm glad the Border Patrol is protecting our U.S. border because all those illegals are taking our jobs.

Carmen could not take it anymore and simply pointed the group in the direction they should go and walked away in tears. In the process of educating white youth about her "México bonito" (beautiful Mexico) she had been betrayed by youth who were glad that God had blessed them enough to be born in the United States.

Carmen's story is often forgotten, even though our community in South Texas is still cleaning up the mess that a short-term mission group left last summer. We hear countless stories of how mission is transforming the lives of youth, how youth are committing themselves to service with the church and how they are developing into the leaders of tomorrow. But at whose expense are gringos developing their own communities? The demonic cycle of white dominance continues to perpetuate itself as short-term mission develops white leaders and instills in white youth and adults the myth of white superiority. As this cycle develops, communities of color come to trust and befriend white people more than we do those in our own community.

Wounded: In our community, the historical and current ramifications of short-term mission have wounded us deeply. The stories from Mathis, Alice and Corpus Christi, from San Juan, Brownsville and Harlingen, are stories of Mennonites who have come with lots of money, a mission and a time frame of one week to three months. Yet as we shout out for change, we are threatened, "If you don't want us whites down there, then just let us know and we'll go to San Antonio or Dallas."

In many ways, South Texas has been the whore of the Mennonite church. The church has continuously used us, never empowered us and always devalued us. Short-term mission is an enterprise in which the rich, the white, the young and the old can come, drain local resources and build a church in the process, never taking the time to teach a craft or empower young Mexican-Americans to pursue their education.

One youth sponsor told us later, "Our youth were threatening to wear T-shirts with a U.S. flag that read, 'I'm proud to be an American' on the day the group was to go into Mexico." One group started working on a pastor's home in Mexico without his permission. The group supposedly had good intentions but did not have the decency to ask the homeowner first if the group could work on the house. The group left with the work incomplete. Good intentions are not enough.

Mennonite racism: Our utter frustration with short-term mission organizations, which continue to justify their wanton behavior, comes from the stories left behind—stories white Mennonite communities and organizations ignore. Are they afraid stories of other communities may reveal the debilitated state of the church's missional focus? Are they afraid that as global communities shout for change, they may also hear those shouts coming from their backyard, a backyard smothered with the stench of Mennonite racism?

One Mennonite college told us, "We don't want any head work [while in your community]." We thought, So what are they going to do? Any group that wants to enter another community without committing itself to the needed "head work" should stay home.

Short-term mission is an enterprise in which the rich, the white, the young and the old can come, drain local resources and build a church in the process.

Recently a gentleman mentioned that this kind of anti-short-term mission talk is only happening among radical groups who are using a language the church does not understand. That is a lie. We write today in protest on behalf of our community in South Texas. The stories are there; the damage has been done. If the Mennonite church wants to continue believing the lie that it is doing "good work," then the Mennonite church is only interested in continuing the development of gringo society.

Are we taking a risk in sharing our stories and frustrations? May we now challenge you, the white Mennonite church, to take the necessary risks in order to transform the enterprise of short-term mission?

Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas is a district of South Texas Mennonite churches within South Central Conference of the Mennonite Church.

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Everett J. Thomas

What to do with $300?

Sometime in the next two months, Washington is going to send me a $300 tax rebate. In fact, almost everyone who paid taxes in 2000 will get a $300 rebate.

After learning about this unexpected windfall, I immediately made plans to spend it. Mainly I want a new bicycle. After all, I ride to the office every day possible, and the 15-year-old beast is wearing out. What better way to spend the money than on something that will help both the environment and the economy at the same time?

But I have decided that I won't spend it on a new bike. Somehow this $300 windfall gives me pause. I realize I do not really need to spend this money on me or on my family. The same is probably true for most of us in our church.

Of course many elderly members who live on a fixed income do need the money to make ends meet. Those in our church who live near the poverty line will experience the returned tax money as providential.

But many of us do not really need it for ourselves. So we now have an opportunity to do something extraordinary. Rather than letting it disappear into the checkbook or immediately spending it on the next thing, we can find a unique way to release these funds so that God's kingdom is extended in some unforeseen way.

The most charitable choice is to direct the money in some way that expands God's kingdom. In doing so, we can give God a rebate for the many blessings bestowed on us.

With most of the 118,000 members in Mennonite Church USA receiving rebates, an estimated $30 million will come into our denomination by the end of September. There are extraordinary possibilities for so much money.

For example, if all the members of our denomination pooled their rebates, we could create a $30 million endowment for Mennonite World Conference or for the Peace Tax Fund. Or maybe God's Spirit will move among the delegates meeting at the convention this week in Nashville, Tenn., and some other inspired plan will emerge at the beginnings of the new Mennonite Church USA.

On a smaller scale, a congregation of 100 members could pool the rebates and give $30,000 to a local homeless shelter. Or make a sizable down payment on a house for a family that cannot get ahead without it.

This $300 is also an opportunity for us to consider changes in public policy. Undoubtedly, those of us who voted for President Bush will view the rebate as confirmation that we made the right choice. But the rebate is part of a larger tax bill that provides most of us with reductions in our taxes in the future. Predictably, the virtues of such a change are argued along party lines.

For example, in the June 4 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine, President Carter's former speech writer Hendrik Hertzberg writes, "Fully phased in, the tax cut will confer upon the average taxpayer in the richest one percent of the population a monthly stipend amounting to something in excess of three thousand dollars ... The poorest ten percent will get less than nothing, because the public services on which they rely will have been trimmed."

However, many Republicans argue that individuals make better decisions about how to spend money than the government does. Further, if we pay fewer taxes then we will spend more money on helping the poor in this country by expanding the economy and giving even more money to charities.

The danger, however, is that these $300 rebates and future tax reductions will be spent with little thought about whether God's kingdom is extended. Getting a $300 check makes this moment more than a time for debate about government programs and the virtues of a tax cut to help the economy bounce back. This rebate and the tax changes in 2001 are a touchstone against which we test our values.

The most charitable choice is to direct the money in some way that expands God's kingdom. In doing so, we can give God a rebate for the many blessings that have been bestowed on us.—*ejt*

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RACISM
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All are
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should peacemakers take sides?

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16 Thank you, Lee ... and Dotty

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The dirt on land ownership

As Tobin Miller Shearer was describing how Mennonite settlers received the land soon after native populations were forcibly removed from it ("Quieted by the Land," June 19), he might have added that today further violence is being committed by some who are lucky enough to own land that their ancestors originally acquired that is now adjacent to a growing metropolitan area. They can sell their land at a huge profit to developers who typically convert the land into low-density suburban sprawl, an inefficient form of land use that is difficult to serve with public transportation, thereby fostering greater use of automobiles that pollute the air and use nonrenewable sources of energy. Even those who try to resist are virtually forced, due to economic circumstances and the difficulty of farming in an urban area, to sell.

Sadly, because of suburban sprawl, thousands of acres of valuable farmland are permanently removed from food production each year. In future years, as the world population continues to grow, this farmland will be needed to feed our grandchildren. Removing this land from food production is a form of violence against this sacred land and against those in the future who may go hungry as a result. As a church, we need to find ways to support those landowners who wish to resist such assault on this resource that God has given to us in a limited supply.—*Richard E. Martin Jr., Evanston, Ill.*

Shearer seems to be very good at picking out things that our forebears did 200 years ago that we are not proud of and rubbing our noses in it. Of course we know about the native peoples being here first. We see evidence of it weekly as we work the land. When and how did Shearer become aware of it? What method would he use to define ownership of the land? If it doesn't belong to anyone, who is responsible for it? It seems that farmers and landowners are responsible for all of our ills, from racism to being poor in spirit. The only remedy Shearer suggests is to become disenfranchised pilgrims and strangers. I would suggest another remedy. I don't think God wants great sacrifice. But he does expect and require justice, mercy and humbly seeking and doing his will. —*A.J. Moser, Bluffton, Ohio*

Economic analysis and the gospel

In response to Allen Stoltzfus' letter (June 12): Expertise in economics can never address economic inequality any more than expertise in conflict management can address the Nazi Holocaust. One can do the arithmetic and the theory all day long and be too blind (spiritually) to see that the basis of economic inequality is social: The rich are the powerful, and they dictate the economy through the political structures they operate.

This isn't specific to the issue of globalization by any means. The entire history of Western-based corporations is a history of exploitation of Third World and domestic laborers and natural resources. Their wealth and political power have multiplied at drastic rates with every decade in the 20th century. Ph.D. economists call this economic growth because more money and more goods are flowing. But poverty has also increased steadily since 1950. The gap between the rich and the poor is bigger than it has ever been in world history, and it's not because God is shortsighted.

The argument that rich capitalists are helping the world's poor by providing them with inhumane factory jobs is the same argument used by slave owners in the U.S. South 150 years ago. They said they were providing for Africans by putting them in a Christian environment and taking care of their needs. Dependence on economic theory ignores the fact that today's poor have also been removed from their land by Western capitalists. The capitalists now offer to enslave them in their factories because the poor have no choice now that their land and resources belong to the rich. Then Wal-Mart sells us the cotton they picked at a low price. The answer is not to buy more cotton from the slave owners in hopes that they will share the economic growth with the slaves. The only answer is to end slavery, and that means political, economic and spiritual reform. Don't do economic analysis without knowing some basics about history, politics and the gospel.—*Dan Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan.*

The objective Word

While studying at Goshen (Ind.) Biblical Seminary in the mid-1950s, I was especially impressed with professor Howard Charles. I remember his words at the beginning of each new study of a book of the Bible, such as the Gospel of John. He said, "All true Bible study must begin with a surrender to it on its terms." In subsequent years, scholars have become more and more critical of the Bible, and have downgraded more and more of its teachings

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
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y readers say

with which they disagree. The result has been that there has been little Bible study in many churches and homes and, consequently, a great deal of Bible ignorance. This is good?

The argument is made that we should pay more attention to Christ and not make such a big thing of the Bible. But from where do we learn about Christ? Mostly from the Bible. The quest for the historical Jesus has not proven too fruitful. The only other significant source is our own subjective experience with Christ, and if we should disagree, why should I give any more credibility to another's subjective experience than my own? We need an objective Word to measure ourselves against. Why would a holy God, "in whom there is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5), leave us with a fallible Scripture? Are we to conclude that an almighty and omniscient and eternal God is incapable of providing us with an objective Word telling us about Christ and expanding on his principles, revealing what we as followers of Christ should really be like? I don't think so.

The decline in respect for the Word of God over the last 50 years seems monumental. With Christians fighting Christians in Ireland, attempts at genocide in various parts of the world, the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer, AIDS ravishing Africa and sexually transmitted diseases growing rapidly around the world, how are we better off? Not that these things haven't happened before, but our scholars and scientists have not made us a better world. More comfortable for some but more miserable for many.

Conclusion: We need God, we need his objective Word, we need Christ's example and teachings, and we need the movings of his Spirit in our hearts and souls. And above all, we need to act upon what we know.—*James Faul, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover photo
by CLEO Photography

Should peacemakers take sides?

The ministry of reconciliation often requires siding with those who are oppressed.

by Julie Hart

In the early hours of April 2, 1999, little more than a week after the start of NATO's bombing of Serbia, a 14-year-old girl named Dalina huddled in the basement of a home in Kosovo, Yugoslavia. With her were 18 other women and children. Outside, Serb police were on a killing and burning rampage. When the troops discovered Dalina and the others, they opened fire on the occupants and set the house ablaze. Dalina and her neighbors died simply because they were Kosovars. The war crimes tribunal has indicted Slobodan Milosevic and four of his top officers for these murders. The indictment lists hundreds of similar atrocities (*Newsweek*, June 7, 1999).

Beyond refugee kits, beyond our prayers, how are Christians to respond to such ethnic conflicts threatening the world today? From Rwanda to Israel/Palestine, Turkey to the former Soviet Union, we find simmering ethnic conflicts. Can Christians do something to prevent such violence? If we do get involved, is it appropriate as peacemakers to take sides?

Our biblical mandate to respond in such conflicts comes from our ministry of reconciliation. The apostle Paul makes it clear in 2 Corinthians 5 that we are given—rather than called to—the ministry of reconciliation. This ministry involves not only healing of broken relationships between individuals but reconciliation in societal conflicts. According to John Paul Lederach in his book *Building Peace*, societal reconciliation encompasses a full array of stages and processes needed to transform group conflict, such as in Yugoslavia, into long-term peaceful relationships. Whether our concern is interpersonal or societal conflict, the focus is on repairing relationships among individuals so that they might live in peace. But the journey to reconciliation in societal conflicts is long and complex.

If Christians are to encourage and support the nonviolent way of Jesus, we must be there training and supporting nonviolent leaders and strategizers among the oppressed population.

Those who have worked in the field of ethnic or societal conflict for decades suggest four predictable stages. They are the latent stage, confrontation, negotiation and long-term peace building. Each holds its own needs, objectives and peacemaker roles. We will examine each stage and ask how peacemakers might respond and if it might be appropriate to take sides.

Latent stage: In the first stage, we find conflict in a latent or hidden form. The people involved, while often suffering from poverty and discrimination, are unaware of the larger system that oppresses them. They need awareness of the oppressive system and of their own power. Once empowered, people are better able to express and negotiate their needs. Peacemaker roles at this latent stage include researcher, observer, nonviolent trainer and strategizer, organizer and advocate.

An excellent example of this work occurred in the Philippines during the 1980s, when Ferdinand Marcos' corrupt military dictatorship was sucking the people dry. This is often the environment for violent revolution. But thanks to the foresight of the faith-based group Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), the empowerment of the people led to a miraculous nonviolent overthrow of President Marcos.

FOR had begun this work a decade earlier with nonviolent trainers who imparted skills to the peasants for making their oppression visible and thus reducing the legitimacy of the Marcos regime. They trained thousands of grass-roots and mid-level leaders in nonviolent direct action strategies to call attention to the injustice. When the time was ripe for change, the people were ready. They poured into the streets, stood nonviolently in front of the military tanks and offered the soldiers who maintained the dictatorship food, flowers and an invitation to defect.

This People's Power success story was one of 10 nonviolent transformations of power around the world begun during the 1980s. Clearly the peacemakers involved in this work took sides with the Philippine peasants in opposition to Marcos and his government. By working with the peasants through education and empowerment, peacemakers were also taking the side of social justice and human rights for all.

Confrontation stage: During the second stage of ethnic conflicts, once the people are empowered and organized, the conflict moves into confrontation between the oppressor and the

Peter Goering

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oppressed. This confrontational stage holds two primary options: violence or nonviolence. If Christians are to encourage and support the nonviolent way of Jesus, we must be there training and supporting nonviolent leaders and strategizers among the oppressed population. We need thousands of volunteers such as those with Christian Peacemaker Teams to stand with the oppressed and model nonviolent yet confrontational responses to injustice.

At the confrontational stage of conflict, it is often beneficial to provide outside parties who have immunity from violence due to their international status. They are able to monitor and record events on the ground so that parties to the conflict are discouraged from resorting to violence. When this stage goes well, the disputants in the conflict begin to acknowledge that the opponent is not going away voluntarily and that violence may not solve the problem. Nonviolent direct action such as we observed during the civil rights struggle in the United States (sit-ins, boycotts, marches, civil disobedience) draws wider support for the oppressed group, and power begins to equalize.

Peacemakers during this stage of a conflict are needed to stand with the oppressed in carrying out nonviolent responses to the injustices of those in power. Peacemakers call attention to the injustices in the international arena. They stand between disputants or in the case of oppressor and oppressed, they protect the oppressed with their bodies, risking suffering and death for the sake of justice. Clearly these roles require taking sides.

Negotiation stage: In the third stage of ethnic conflict, disputants realize they are not going to eliminate each other easily. The fight is often more protracted than anticipated. Opponents begin to see the need for peaceful coexistence. Time is finally ripe for negotiation on the divisive issues at the root of the conflict.

Peacemakers' roles during this third stage include mediation and facilitation of problem-solving workshops. Peacemakers are able to create a safe place for dialogue leading to new, creative ways of responding to old issues. Few people are aware that the last agreement in the Middle East peace process, the Oslo Accords, was initiated by nongovernmental groups in Norway who organized meetings between mid-level Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

In these private, off-the-record meetings, the mid-level leaders were able to build trust and view issues in new and creative ways unbridled by their constituencies and government positions. The mid-level leaders then took their vision and hope back to the governmental leaders, who reopened the official peace process. Mennonite Central Committee and many other nongovernmental organizations have provided these services in hot spots around the world. During this stage of negotiation and mediation, unlike the earlier stages, it is important for peacemakers to remain impartial and not take sides.

Long-term peace-building stage: Finally, following a negotiated agreement, the work of reconciliation and long-term peace building goes into high gear. Peacemakers are needed to work with combatants and noncombatants on both sides of the conflict to heal the psychological and societal wounds of war. Peacemakers with counseling and social work backgrounds are needed to aid citizens in trauma-healing work. Also, in order for healing and reconciliation to occur, peacemakers are needed to design a process for truth telling and forgiveness among those who oppressed and those who suffered oppression.

For healing and reconciliation to occur, peacemakers need to design a process for truthtelling and forgiveness among those who oppressed and those who suffered oppression.

An excellent example of this process is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa. Peacemakers with group facilitation skills are also needed to help citizens envision a society where the victims and the offenders might live in peace with justice. In this final stage, peacemakers take sides with social justice in helping create opportunities for full reconciliation.

As I've laid out peacemakers' roles in the four stages of conflict—latent, confrontation,

continued on page 6

Should peacemakers take sides?

continued from page 5

negotiation and long-term peace building or reconciliation—it is important to ask what is preventing us from responding more fully to this global ministry of reconciliation. I suggest four primary barriers.

Barriers to responding: First, North American Christians have been socialized in a culture that places primary responsibility for international conflicts on governments. This belief system prevents us from practicing these wider peacemaking roles.

Second, as we discovered at Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., nonviolent confrontation is controversial and messy. It offends people, and we dislike making enemies.

Third, until recently we have had few models for international peacemaking and reconciliation among Christians. Knowledge and skills of peacemaking in divided societies are only now emerging.

Finally, and most importantly, many of us are limited in our thinking about peacemakers' roles. If we see peacemaking as limited to mediation, it is "un-Christian" to engage in the more active roles of organizer, advocate and nonviolent actor that are needed in the early stages of an ethnic conflict.

When we examine all four stages of conflict, it is easy to see that the impartial roles of peacemaking (mediation and facilitation) are ready only after peacemakers take sides to equalize power between the oppressor and the oppressed. Mediation is ineffective where major imbalances in power exist.

The impartial roles of peacemaking (mediation and facilitation) are ready only after peacemakers take sides so as to equalize power between the oppressor and the oppressed.

We have been given the ministry of reconciliation and peacemaking in divided societies. For most of us, this means a commitment to healing broken interpersonal relationships in our families, churches and places of work. For the church as a whole, the ministry of reconciliation requires healing broken ethnic group relationships in our communities and in our world. It is a difficult but often miraculous ministry, as it requires us to take sides with the oppressed and speak painful truth to the oppressor regarding the injustices they perpetuate. Perhaps if more peacemakers had taken sides, as requested by Christian Yugoslavians a decade prior to their nation's violent conflict, Dalina and thousands of others like her would still be alive.

Julie Hart teaches sociology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

I love you Jake

Transforming guilt to service

by Alice Swope

I stabbed at the fried egg with my fork and automatically raised my head to listen. The stillness was unreal, eerie even. I took another bite, still listening. The only sound was the happy purring of Remus, my cat.

"OK. What's holding you back, Jake?" I said. "Come on. Yell. I'm eating eggs this morning. You know how I hate cold eggs."

I looked around the room, wondering if the pain would ever go away.

I could see into the clean, orderly living room where the furniture was arranged attractively. For just a second I could not remember what had happened to Jake's hospital bed.

I pushed my plate back, dropped my head onto my arms and started to sob.

Jake would never ruin another meal for me. He would never again drag me out of a tub of warm bubbles to bring him a glass of water. He would never again interrupt a favorite TV program to ask me for his pills. My time was my own. I was free to do what I wanted, when I wanted to do it. I had all kinds of time; time stretching into infinity.

I guess I had loved Jake from the moment I first saw him. We went together for a few months, were married in a glow of happiness and settled down to the perfect life. I expected this wonderful life to go on forever.

How little we know what lies ahead for us. One day our legs were knocked out from under us. Jake was diagnosed with incurable bone cancer.

After we had screamed in frustration and denial, after we had hugged and cried, after we had fully accepted his fate, we settled down to live each day to the fullest.

Each day Jake got weaker, until he was confined to a hospital bed we set up in the living room. That's when the frustration began.

Routine disrupted: Sometimes I found myself resenting that our routine was disrupted so completely. I seemed to have no free time.Jake and I had always shared the daily tasks. I fixed the breakfast while Jake made the coffee. He got home before I did, so he usually dried and folded the clothes I had washed. We weeded the flowers, kneeling side by side. He washed one side of the car, I washed the other. We were a real team.

After Jake got sick, I had to give up all outside activities so that I could stay home and care for him. At the same time, I wondered if that had been a good idea, as I knew nothing about nursing. I had to try it though, for it meant I could be with him all the time.

Our lives changed drastically. Mornings I did not have time to dress or have a cup of coffee before the daily grind began. Jake needed his medication on time or the pain was too horrible for him to manage. He needed to have his teeth brushed because his mouth was so dry and his lips were cracking. He needed his face washed and a change of clothes and bedding, for he had no bowel control. He had to have a drink of juice and a small breakfast.

Finally, I would get a cup of coffee. As I sat down to savor it, Jake often called, "Honey, can you help me?"

When I got back to my place at the kitchen table, my coffee was lukewarm. I poured it down the drain and went in to dress and put on some makeup for the day.

Jake called, "Excuse me, honey, but I really need help."

On my way to him I sputtered in a whisper so he couldn't hear, "Darn it, Jake. Isn't it enough I get your breakfast first? I haven't even had a cup of coffee yet." I pasted a smile on my face and went to help him, knowing I didn't really mean to be annoyed. He needed me. I needed him. I loved him so much.

True love and conern: Of course, my whole existence was not one of irritation and frustration. Most of the time my life consisted of true love and concern.I inched close to Jake, to where he lay on his hospital bed in our now cluttered living room. I ran my fingers over his bony hand, which was covered with thin, parchment-like skin, and remembered the early years of our marriage.

I held his head close to my shoulder and coaxed him to eat a few more bites of custard. My hands gently washed his emaciated body and my lips traced a line across his face and neck as I gave him all the love I had always had for him.

That was the way most of our life went, interspersed with the flares of annoyance washed with guilt.

When Jake died, all I could think of were the moments of irritation. Sometimes my guilt consumed me. With the guilt came overwhelming tears.

Now I looked up from my place and from long habit I listened in vain for the voice saying, "Hon, excuse me. Can you help me?"

The Bible I had not opened in months beckoned to me. I turned my back and picked up the morning paper. One item mentioned a little boy suffering from leukemia. He needed a transplant. He was at home with a single mother. I felt bad for her and what she must be going through, trying to take care of him as she worried and fretted over his condition. Sometimes she must feel hemmed in and long for a little time to herself.

The words "Help me" came into my mind.

A few days earlier I had read of a man who took care of his terminally ill wife at home.

"Help me."

Be a servant: I tossed the paper across the table and looked at the Bible. I flipped through the pages and stopped at Matthew 23:11: "The more lowly your services to others, the greater you are. To be the greatest, be a servant."

"Help me" still clanged in my brain.

Was this a message of some kind? Could I help these people? I'd had enough experience with Jake. I could give others a few hours of freedom.

I shook my head. "Nope. Not me. I've had enough."

I flipped through again, to Ephesians 5:15-16: "So be careful how you act; these are difficult days. Don't be fools; be wise: make the most of every opportunity you have for doing good."

"Help me!"

I sighed. "OK, Lord. You've made your point."

I closed the book gently and looked toward the living room. It was so empty with no hospital bed and no food trays. No Jake.

I heard his voice whispering, "Help me."

I decided that right after breakfast I would call on each of these families and offer my services. Peace I had not felt in ages entered my body.

I pulled my plate back toward me, picked up my fork, took a bite of egg and gagged.

Well, one thing hadn't changed. I still hated cold eggs.

Alice Swope lives in Lebanon, Ore.

Was this a message of some kind? Could I help these people? I'd had enough experience with Jake. I could give others a few hours of freedom.

This is a true story regarding my husband and me. He died June 5, 1990. I have found that even in my small town there are lots of people caring for loved ones who need a little time to themselves and those who just need a little friendship or an understanding ear. I can do that, and the guilt has vanished as I do God's bidding.
—*Alice Swope*

Convention takes stage at Nashville

Delegates urge moving ahead with new denomination

Dale D. Gehman

The Nashville 2001 youth convention worship band leads singing during the youth convention's opening session July 2. Some 6,000 youth and sponsors, plus 3,200 adults and children, have registered for Nashville 2001, according to preliminary reports.

> We all agree that Scripture should be our orienting focus, but we don't interpret that the same way.
>
> —*Duane Friesen*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The General Conference Mennonite Church (GC)-Mennonite Church (MC) convention in Music City U.S.A. took the stage July 2 with many delegates hoping that their performance will feature the creation of a new church and conclude at the end of the week with visions of renewed faithfulness.

More than 9,200 people, including 6,000 youth, had registered for Nashville 2001, according to preliminary reports.

The convention started Monday evening, July 2, with adult and youth worship services, followed by an ice cream social sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid.

The next day, GC and MC delegates got down to the business of trying to form Mennonite Church USA out of their two denominations. They spent the morning session listening to presentations on the transformation process.

The afternoon very well could have been the last for separate GC and MC delegate assemblies. GC delegates spent one hour in session with their MC counterparts observing, then the two groups reversed roles for the next hour. They will meet jointly for the rest of the convention. If they pass the membership guidelines and plan of merger in a vote scheduled for July 5, the two delegate assemblies will be abolished in favor of one Mennonite Church USA delegate assembly.

The July 3 afternoon sessions were open-mike times without any agenda, allowing delegates to speak on any pertinent topic. They addressed abortion, materialism, racism, the environment, funding for the new denomination and other issues. But not surprisingly, transformation's tangential issues of homosexuality and church membership received the most attention.

Some delegates spoke in opposition to the membership guidelines' controversial third section, which focuses on homosexuality. "It lifts up one issue beyond all the others," said Steve Goering, GC delegate from Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Other delegates, meanwhile, voiced concern about accommodating homosexuality. "To ask a nurse to affirm a diabetic patient to eat sweets and anything he wants, that's not loving," said Elaine Bryant, MC delegate from Illinois Conference. "I can love, but I can also recognize and challenge a lifestyle."

But a number of delegates issued calls to go forward with the work of the church, despite the disagreements. "I strongly urge all of us to move beyond this point," said Marion Schrock, MC delegate from Pacific Northwest Conference, which in 1994 became one of the first two U.S. integrated area conferences. "The future holds only good things for God's people."

Said Duane Friesen, GC delegate from Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.: "We have to face the fact that on [homosexuality] ... we have different interpretations of Scripture. We all agree that Scripture should be our orienting focus, but we don't interpret that the same way."

But GC delegate Bob Gerhart said his congregation, Hereford Mennonite Church in Bally, Pa., cannot abide by such ambiguity and therefore will not join Mennonite Church USA. "If it's not settled, we cannot be part of it," he said.

Dagne Assefa, MC delegate from Indiana-Michigan Conference, implored dissenters not to withdraw. "We need the prophetic voice," he said. "Only if we come together can we overcome our differences."—*Rich Preheim*

Editor's note: The July 17 issue will carry full coverage of Nashville 2001.

Transformation cost: $1.5 million so far

Nearly $430,000 still needed for creation of new church

To transform the current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church structures into Mennonite Church USA, nearly $1.5 million has been spent since 1999 by the GC and MC program agencies and by the Executive Board that has been overseeing both denominations. And that price tag could go up to $2.2 million or more before the merger process is scheduled to be completed on Feb. 1, 2002, the date by when Mennonite Church USA and its agencies are to be in place.

All but $429,184 of the estimated final cost has been accounted for through contributions, reserve funds and regular operating budgets.

"The transformation process is an investment in the future," says Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director-designate. "It aims to strengthen coming generations to make a difference in our world through mission and witness. Significant investments of time, talent, prayer and money support this effort."

While the GC-MC merger has been in process for nearly two decades, it is only in the last two years that efforts have intensified. From 1997 until the 1999 convention in St. Louis, most merger activity was lodged with the Integration Committee, which spent nearly $607,000 of its $636,000 budget. Since 1999, however, each GC and MC entity has had to prepare for the new denomination.

The largest piece of the transformation-expenses pie has gone to the creation of a new mission structure for Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada, to be funded entirely from reserve funds of the Commission on Home Ministries (10 percent), Commission on Overseas Mission (27 percent) and Mennonite Board of Missions (63 percent).

From April 1999 through last October, a joint "mission transformation" team spent $356,531 exploring a vision for U.S. and Canadian mission work. Since Nov. 1, 2000, a "mission transition" team has been developing structures out of that vision with a budget of $866,948, of which $353,626 has been spent so far.

Major budget items include $218,441 for U.S. and Canadian mission transformation project staff, $153,800 for travel and meetings and $118,154 for consultants.

At St. Louis 99, delegates approved a $905,000 budget for Executive Board-related transformation tasks. But Ted Stuckey, Executive Board associate general secretary, estimates that costs will come in about $29,000 under budget. About $686,000 has been spent so far. The biggest expenses have been $187,042 for staff salaries, $95,940 for travel and $83,172 for developing a funding proposal for Mennonite Church USA. In addition, $74,451 has been sent to Mennonite Church Canada to compensate for binational staff who are now working primarily on U.S. agenda.

To help with its transformation expenses, an Executive Board task force has been working to raise $800,000. About $446,000 has been generated so far. The board asked congregations to give their Oct. 29, 2000, offering for the cause, which brought $125,109. Sept. 30 has been designated for another such offering, and offerings at the Nashville convention will also go for transformation expenses.

Other income for the Executive Board's transformation budget has been $140,257 left from merger work before the St. Louis convention, $77,375 from the former GC General Board and $49,284 from the former MC General Board.

Unlike the mission agencies and the Executive Board, the other denominational program agencies have not kept separate budgets for transformation work. Rather, those costs were part of their regular operating budgets. Since the St. Louis convention, the former Mennonite Publishing House and Faith & Life Press spent $61,800 for travel, meetings and legal fees, estimates Dennis Good, Mennonite Publishing House Inc. executive vice president. The two operations merged Feb. 1 to form MPH Inc.

Merger price tag

Spending from April 1999 to June 2001

Mission	$710,157
Exec. Board	685,920
Publishing	61,800
Education	25,000
TOTAL	**$1.48 million**

Meanwhile, Mennonite Board of Education and the Higher Education Council spent about $25,000 for their merger work, says MBE president Orville Yoder. Neither the publishing nor the education figures include staff time.

Transformation expenses were negligible for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and the Commission on Education, whose responsibilities will be folded into the Executive Board.

The other proposed Mennonite Church USA program agency is Mennonite Mutual Aid, which already was an inter-Mennonite program. MMA, however, has been a major financial supporter of the merger. MMA provided $284,300 for denominationwide work prior to St. Louis and for the past two years has freed vice president Karl Sommers to serve half-time as an Executive Board transformation consultant.—*Rich Preheim*

More merger costs: logos and legal fees

The creation of Mennonite Church USA is more than just the cost of transforming the denominational agencies.

For example, it took about $1,200 to get a new logo for Mennonite Women, the successor to Women in Mission and the Women's Missionary and Service Commission.

Three merged area conferences have already been formed, and others from coast to coast are exploring the idea. All those initiatives obviously require money.

Then there is the not-so-obvious. Goshen (Ind.) College is legally part of Mennonite Board of Education. Yet according to the proposal for the new Mennonite Education Agency, all colleges will have to be separately incorporated. Goshen will have to go through that process and join the other four denominational colleges, which are already incorporated.—*Rich Preheim*

MBM photo by Ernest Gnonlonfoun

Members of the Mikpamahu [We Praise God] community bank in Glazoué, Benin, which is supported by Mennonite Board of Missions

West Africans can bank on MBM support

Microenterprise programs strengthen communities

COTONOU, Benin—Béatrice Djossou scored the highest in her class on the oral exam at the end of a two-year health education program. A week later she lost her toddler to malnutrition.

Djossou knew that her 12-month-old needed protein in his porridge if he were to remain healthy after she weaned him. But with her husband unemployed, she couldn't afford even the cheapest forms of protein, such as ground peanuts or minnow flour.

This incident unmasked the complexity of malnutrition for Raphaël Edou, the director of community health at Bethesda Health Center in Cotonou, Benin. Realizing that health has an economic component, he began a job creation and community bank program in 1996. The program and two others in Benin last year received financial support from Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) as part of two contributions totaling $150,000 from North American donors.

"The donors desire to strengthen the economic status of individuals so they in turn can strengthen their churches and communities," says Vicki Jennings, MBM special assistant to the president for the development office.

Bethesda has made loans worth $410,000 over the past five years. Its grant from MBM funds a pilot program to improve the hygiene of food sold to schoolchildren. School lunches in Benin often come from women selling porridge, fish sauce, doughnuts, peanuts and manioc flour in front of educational establishments. Open sewers stagnate alongside the stands while clouds of flies swarm overhead. The Bethesda program loaned 30 women $70 each to expand and diversify their food production. The recipients attend training seminars in nutrition, food-handling hygiene and marketing skills. Edou's staff makes biweekly visits to the cooks in their kitchens.

A year after the MBM grants infused increased vitality into the community banks, Phil Lindell Detweiler, MBM's country representative in Benin, says, "There is definite success. The banks are functioning properly, women are getting loans, and they are generating income."

Community banks provide hope for women who were previously forced to borrow money with interest rates of 40 percent to 100 percent over a six-month period. They report with joy about how they have been able to pay school fees so their children are able to complete an entire academic year.

In addition to expanding their businesses, many of the women have begun savings accounts. "This credit has washed away my shame," says Bertine Hounnon, a member of a community bank called In God There Is Increase.

Claudine Gangbe was pregnant and had two sons when she took out a loan of $40 from the community bank of the village of Glazoué. She buys produce directly from farmers and sells it to market women. Gangbe's increased income enabled her to register her teenager in high school and to take her 4-year-old to the hospital when he fell ill.

In Ghana, Ivory Coast and Togo, MBM grants have helped the Anabaptist and Mennonite churches there establish nongovernmental organizations that will create and govern community banks.

"This is different from past initiatives in that it is not simply assistance to individuals," says Steve Wiebe-Johnson, coordinator for MBM activities in West Africa. "The group is responsible for the repayment of the entire loan, thus increasing … accountability."—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

The first is last with EMM email

All Eastern Mennonite Missions workers now have email. And the last ones to get it were those in EMM's first overseas mission site.

EMM has been in Shirati, Tanzania, since 1934. While the agency has had email connections with the rest of its workers around the world, Tanzania had lacked regular telephone service—and thus lacked email capabilities—until earlier this year. But the country now has a wireless telephone system, allowing the workers in Shirati to get on the information superhighway.

EMM field director Verle Rufenacht, who has worked in Shirati for 24 years, says he still forgets to check his email. He had gotten used to the three weeks it took for a letter to travel between Shirati and EMM headquarters in Salunga, Pa. For emergencies, the Shirati team had rigged together a ham radio-telephone jack combination.—*EMM News Service*

MCC meeting participants express support for faith-based initiatives despite concerns

BALTIMORE—God's generosity can flow through many sources, according to Steve Cheramie Risingsun.

"We do look to God to supply our need, but this does not preclude government money through Charitable Choice," Risingsun, a Mennonite pastor and Houma tribal chief from Gretna, La., told a June 8-9 meeting to explore the implications of the federal government's involvement in the church's anti-poverty work.

Charitable Choice, a provision under the 1996 welfare reform law, allows several government agencies to make direct grants to faith-based organizations to provide certain social services, yet protects the "religious character" of those organizations. President Bush and several members of Congress have proposed expanding Charitable Choice to additional services and government agencies while not increasing total federal spending.

The Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office held the Baltimore meetings to share information about Charitable Choice and to hear constituent perspectives and recommendations for MCC U.S. action on such faith-based initiatives.

While questions and concerns remain for many, the group as a whole recommended that MCC U.S. and the Washington Office publicly support Charitable Choice for congregations that wish to pursue government grants. These recommendations were passed on to the MCC U.S. board at its June 14 meeting.

Participants, many involved in urban churches, also challenged MCC U.S. to help communicate to the broader church the situation of those living in poverty in the United States. Stories wove together the common struggle of churches responding with limited resources to overwhelming needs in their communities.

"People in our community look to the church for social services … whether we have the money or not," said panel presenter Donna Lawrence Jones, pastor of a Philadelphia United Methodist congregation that has accepted state grants.

Participants also said Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups can and should do more to financially support social ministries based in congregations.

"I would love if MCC and the conferences would create a pool of financial resources for urban and poor rural churches to draw from for our work," said Leonard Dow, a Philadelphia Mennonite pastor and MCC service program administrator. "But since they don't, we may look to where there is funding."

Ron Sider, a Mennonite who presides over Evangelicals for Social Action, believes Charitable Choice is a promising policy because it affirms the good work churches have been doing for years.

"More money is allowed to flow to holistic, faith-based providers who combine scientific techniques with religious components such as prayer, worship and study of sacred texts," he said, adding that churches no longer have to abandon the latter to receive state grants.

"Anabaptist theology does not suggest that Charitable Choice is wrong or unwise, though with any policy, the potential for negative side effects demands that we proceed with caution and diligence," Sider said.

Those concerns also generated discussion. Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries, stressed the prophetic nature of being an "alternative community." Speaking freely to injustices could "become difficult when the church becomes dependent on the state's money to run its programs," she said.

Others asked whether President Bush's faith-based initiative indicates that government is diverting its responsibility to care for the poor to the churches.

"Over the long term, will government become dependent on the offering of its constituents?" asked Neftali Torres, Mennonite pastor from Buffalo, N.Y.

While MCC U.S. does not receive any government funding, meeting participants encouraged it to develop intermediary agencies in major urban areas to network and assist congregational efforts, even as conduits for government grants.—*Elisabeth T. Harder for MCC News Service*

I would love if MCC and the conferences would create a pool of financial resources for urban and poor rural churches to draw from for our work. But since they don't, we may look to where there is funding.

—*Leonard Dow*

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) seeks a

Regional Director of Development

To be part of a team that raises support for MEDA. Responsibilities include acquiring new major gifts, working with existing donors, developing new planned gifts, and soliciting foundations, among other things. Frequent travel is involved; the position will be based in Waterloo, Ont.; Winnipeg, Man.; or Lancaster, Pa. Start date: Sept. 1, 2001. For more information, or to apply:

visit www.meda.org/who_we_are/jobs.html or call Jennifer Helmuth, HR Administrator, 1-800-665-7026; Fax: (519) 725-9083. E-mail: jhelmuth@meda.org

this date in Mennonite history

July 10, 1955—The Jamaica Mennonite Church is organized at Constant Spring, Jamaica, with 26 members.

El Salvador quake response exceeds goal

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador—Thanks to constituency support, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) rebuilding projects are progressing rapidly in earthquake-devastated El Salvador.

Following the earthquake earlier this year, MCC had committed $400,000 in assistance, mostly for constructing 200 to 300 homes. But MCC has received more than $730,000 in contributions for the project, prompting the agency to expand the work to 400 homes. Other options are being explored as well.

MCC is also distributing 6,200 relief buckets supplied by MCC supporters, plus MCC canned pork.

In addition the MCC regional and provincial offices are sending short-term Work and Learn teams to assist in the construction. The first team, from the U.S. West Coast and Manitoba, returned to North America on May 26. Work groups are also coming from Belize, Guatemala and Mexico.—*MCC News Service*

Three Mennonite Media videos win awards

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Three videos from Mennonite Media have been honored by the international Videographer Awards.

Many Grains and *Beyond the News: Facing Death* each received the Award of Distinction, while *Rhythms of Peace 2,* received honorable mention. *Many Grains* is an introduction to the Mennonite Church, *Facing Death* profiles families experiencing serious illness or death, and *Rythms of Peace 2* is a children's video promoting nonviolence.

The competition received more than 2,400 entries from around the world. Other winning organizations included AT&T, Habitat for Humanity, NBC and the U.S. Postal Service. —*MBM News Service*

Hesston to name baseball field after ex-coach

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College will name its campus baseball field after Evan Oswald, a Hesston alumnus and former coach and athletic director.

Oswald, an Ohio native, attended Hesston from 1946 to 1948, then returned to teach and coach from 1951 to 1971. He then worked at Navajo Community College in Arizona for 14 years. Oswald and his wife, Martha, are retired and live in Glendale, Ariz. He holds a bachelor's degree from Goshen (Ind.) College and a master's degree in physical education and coaching from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

The name change will be made during the school's homecoming and alumni weekend celebration Sept. 21-23.

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Workers

Greenawalt, Kimberlee, was licensed April 19 as youth minister for Virginia Mennonite Conference.
Jantzi, Daniel and Jeanne Zimmerly, Lowville, N.Y., are beginning a five-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Indonesia as country representatives.
Jones, Larry and Melanie, Nashville, Tenn., are beginning a six-year MCC assignment in Recife, Brazil, as country representatives.
Miller, Edward and Twila, Akron, Pa., are beginning a four- to six-year MCC assignment in India as country representatives.
Rudy, Carolyn and Jon, Harrisonburg, Va., are beginning a six-year MCC assignment in the Philippines as Asia regional peace networker and personnel support.
Yoder, Darrin, Hollsopple, Pa., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as Lancaster County service program coordinator.

Births

Ayars, Seth Michael, June 18, to Jonathan and Tonya (Hunsberger) Ayars, Sellersville, Pa.
Boliver, Victoria Mareen, June 4, to Barbara (Barr) and Loren Boliver, Lowville, N.Y.
Bontrager, Ian Christopher, March 2, received for adoption June 18 by Kenton and Phyllis (Bauman) Bontrager, Baltimore.
Chavous, Jasmine Rose, June 19, to James and Vicki (Halteman) Chavous, Sellersville, Pa.
Crossgrove, Lindsey Nicole, June 12, to Julie (Sauder) and Trevor Crossgrove, Wauseon, Ohio.
Friesen, Sophie Christine, June 3, to Memuna Muna and Timothee Friesen, Baltimore.
Hartzel, Kristian Ryan, May 24, to Keven and Marcia (Keeler) Hartzel.
Hege, Anna Sofia, May 7, to Daniel and Katarina (Oladottir) Hege, Syracuse, N.Y.
Layman, Austin Mikel, April 13 to Erin (Frerichs) and Tony Layman, Beatrice, Neb.
Martin, Anna Lei, June 11, to Kelly (Lindsay) and Jeremy Martin, Lebanon, Pa.
Miller, Haley Nicole, June 19 to Janelle (Hilty) and Robert Miller, Elkhart, Ind.
Ramseyer, Isaac LeRoy, June 2, to Eric and Roxie (Lehman) Ramseyer, Dalton, Ohio.
Reaume, Gabriel Giovanni, June 8, to Diana (Penner) and Justin Reaume, LeMarque, Texas.
Reese, Kaitlyn Grace, June 18, to Julie (Ramer) and Mick Reese, Goshen, Ind.
Russell, Benjamin Richard, April 12, to Bruce and Sherry (Shoemaker) Russell.
Showalter, Kyle James, June 4, to Sean and Tina Showalter, Bridgewater, Va.
Slater, Jesse Carl, June 14, to Kate Elizabeth (Yoder) and Keith Slater, Kunming, China.
Smith, Owen Menno, June 8, to Heather (Pendergraft) and Todd Smith, Mount Vernon, Iowa.
Weiler, Kortnee Nichole, May 15, to Rosanne (Martin) and Willie Weiler, Myerstown, Pa.
Weldy, Briana Kari, June 4, to Phillip and Ronda (Hoffman) Weldy, Cannelburg, Ind.
Wenger, Carissa Lynn, May 31, to Dorothy (Butrick) and Kevin Wenger, Wayland, Iowa.
Wenger, Collin Reece, May 7, to Charlotte (Guarisco) and Shane Wenger, Luling, La.
Yoder, Quinton John, June 7, to Rebecca (Porter) and Tim Yoder, South Euclid, Ohio.
Yoder, Tobias Christian, June 13, to James and Kathy (Yoder) Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.

Marriages

Balzer/Friesen: Timothy Balzer, Buhler, Kan., and Amanda Friesen, Henderson, Neb., June 16 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Bateman/Wieand: Matt Bateman, Goshen, Ind., and Becky Wieand, Goshen, June 16 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Bontrager/Yoder: Bethany Bontrager, Harrisonburg, Va., and Bradley Yoder, Harrisonburg, June 3, near Broadway, Va.
Bressler/Yoder: Pamela Bressler, Bristol, Ind., and Robert Yoder, Somerset, Pa., May 26 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.
Brunk/Hoschar: Bob Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va., and Keri Sue Hoschar, Harrisonburg, June 23.
Coblentz/Halsey: Jennifer Coblentz, Hartville, Ohio, and David Halsey, North Canton, Ohio, June 2 at Hartville Mennonite Church.
Cook-Wiens/Krehbiel: Eric Cook-Wiens, Cedar Falls, Iowa, and Stephanie Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan., June 9 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Derstine/Livezey: Anita Derstine, Hatfield, Pa., and Mark Livezey, Jamestown, N.Y., June 23 at Line Lexington (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Eby/Wert: J.B. Eby, Belleville, Pa., and Heather Wert, Belleville, June 2 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.
Friesen/Mintenko: Dayle Friesen, Altona, Man., and John Mintenko, Winnipeg, June 23 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Goertzen/Meyer: Candace Goertzen, Beatrice, Neb., and Jerrad Meyer, Ceresco, Neb., June 9 at Beatrice.
Hall/Siebert: Jeremy Hall, McCool Junction, Neb., and Heather Siebert, McCool Junction, June 9 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.
Hartzel/Witmer: Randall Hartzel, Sellersville, Pa., and Nancy Witmer, Maple Glen, Pa., April 21 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.
Heller/Martin: Brad Heller, Cleona, Pa., and Julie Martin, Lebanon, Pa., June 16 at Cornwall (Pa.) United Methodist Church.
Kehler/Wilson: Tim Kehler, Altona, Man., and Margo Wilson, Winnipeg, June 23 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Martin/Moyer: LuCinda Martin, Harleysville, Pa., and Matthew Moyer, Sellersville, Pa., June 23 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.
Parker/Sandridge: Cindi Parker, Harrisonburg, Va., and Lee Sandridge, Harrisonburg, June 16.
Plank/Yoder: Julie Plank, Mattawana, Pa., and Eric L. Yoder, Mifflintown, Pa., June 9 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.
Rensink/Waltner: Sarah Rensink, Freeman, S.D., and Ryan Waltner, Freeman, June 9 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.
Repsher/Schlosser: Mike Repsher, Bethlehem, Pa., and Dawn Schlosser, Souderton, Pa., May 11 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa.

Deaths

Bean, Andrew, 90, Kitchener, Ont., died June 14. Spouse: Reta Kufske Bean (deceased). Parents: Warren and Margretha Bean (deceased). Survivors: children Elizabeth McNair, Warren; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 18 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.
Blosser, Mabel Frey, 92, Dixon, Ill., died June 16. Spouse: Aquila Henry Blosser (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Edith Nice Frey (deceased). Survivors: children Elvin, Darrell, Laverne, Elaine Stuckey; 12 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 20 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling, Ill.
Conrad, Mary Margaret Martin, 73, Albany, Ore., died June 1. Spouse: Amos B. Conrad (deceased). Parents: Jesse (deceased) and Catherine Collier Martin. Other survivors: children Landon, John, Jay, Peter, Amy Phend; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at Albany Mennonite Church.
Gautsche, LeAnna Sauder, 73, Archbold, Ohio, died June 15 of liver disease. Spouse: Dale Gautsche. Parents: Harry and Viola Sauder (deceased). Other survivors: children Kevin, Luther, Alonna Sprunger, LaDell; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 18 at Tedrow (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Godshall, Joann Harner, 65, Newport News, Va., died June 13 of cancer. Spouse: Abe Godshall (deceased). Parents: Roy H. and Margaret Weaver Harner (deceased). Survivors: children Janice Porter, Julie Forbes, Allen; five grandchildren; stepmother Mary Harner. Memorial service: June 15 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News.
Hamm, Jacob P., 84, Altona, Man., died May 26. Spouse: Eva Hamm. Parents: Peter and Gertrude Funk Hamm (deceased). Other survivors: children Conroy, Lorna Douville; one grandson. Funeral: May 30 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Hiebner, Irvin, 80, Henderson, Neb., died June 10. Spouse: Martha Peters Hiebner. Parents: George and Aganetha Hiebner (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Mierau, Elaine Sweigart, Robert; 11 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 14 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Hostetler, Moses, 93, Trail, Ohio, died June 10. Spouse: (1st) Verba Weaver Hostetler (deceased); (2nd) Ethel Engle Hostetler (deceased); (3rd) Crystal Mae Keehn Bendure Hostetler. Parents: John and Mattie Mast Hostetler (deceased). Other survivors: children June Butler, Joan Badertscher; stepchildren Robert Bendure, Bonnie Leighley, Beverly Mears, Barbara Miller; eight grandchildren; 4 stepgrandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 14 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Kennel, Vernon Paul, 75, Shickley, Neb., died June 9 of cancer. Spouse: Shirley Noel Kennel. Parents: Benjamin and Martha Kennel (deceased). Other survivors: children Dallas, Layle, Diane Schweitzer, Lisa Kennel, Lanae Miers; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 12 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.
Lampl, Nettie Good, 72, Goshen, Ind., died May 15. Spouse: George Lampl. Parents: Joe and Anna Martin Good. Other survivors: children Andrea Ulrich, Judy, Debbie Stoltzfus; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 18 at Kouts, Ind.
Moyer, Ruth, 73, Brockway, Pa., died June 14. Spouse: Richard Moyer. Parents: John W. and Margaret Knouse Gingrich (deceased). Other survivors: children Darlis, Daniel, Lynette Hughes; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 18 at Crenshaw (Pa.) Community Church.

Nielsen, Peter, 67, Dayton, Va., died June 11. Spouse: Anne Nielsen. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Walter M. Nielsen (deceased). Other survivors: children Eric, Clare Neal; one grandchild. Memorial service: June 15 at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Penner, Henry, 57, Altona, Man., died June 9. Spouse: Ruth Penner. Parents: Henry D. and Eva Braun Penner. Other survivors: children Ryan, Derek, Natasha; one grandson. Funeral: June 13 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Ratzlaff, Bryan, 51, Henderson, Neb., died June 19. Parents: Leon (deceased) and Jean Ratzlaff. Funeral: June 23 at Henderson Mennonite Brethren Church.

Reedy, Clinton L., 97, Goshen, Ind., died June 1. Spouse: (1st) Velda Grieser Reedy (deceased); (2nd) Gladys Zehr Reedy (deceased). Parents: Peter and Susan Christophel Reedy (deceased). Survivors: children Joan Griffith, Nancy Miller, Stan; seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Roth, Jay I., 59, Vienna, Va., died June 6 of a stroke. Spouse: Shirley Peachey Roth. Parents: Irvin and Lena Zook Roth (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Michelle Roth-Cline. Funeral: June 11 at Oakton Church of the Brethren, Vienna.

Schmidt, Rubina Voth, 90, Buhler, Kan., died May 26. Spouse: John D. Schmidt (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Sara Voth. Survivors: children Glenna Schrag, Dellis Dick, Kathy Rauckman, Darrel, John Steven; 15 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Snyder, V. Stanley II (Stan), 78, Lansing, Mich., died June 16. Spouse: Betty Slagel Snyder. Parents: Vernon and Mamie Smith Snyder (deceased). Other survivors: children Jake, Carla Trevino, John, Mary Beth; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 19 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Ashley, Mich.

Thomas, Helen Brubaker, 87, Lititz, Pa., died May 21 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: deceased. Parents: Hadyn and Lillie Brubaker (deceased). Survivors: children Wilmer, Mary Lou Stoltzfus, Glenn, Joanne Mylin; 16 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 25 at Lititz Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible.
  For further information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; email <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Turpin Mennonite Church**, Turpin, Okla., is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Applicant would have the opportunity to minister to a congregation of varied ages and denominational backgrounds.
  Contact Shirley Eggers at 580-259-6457 or Alan Hodges at 580-778-3315.

- **Huber Mennonite Church**, New Carlisle, Ohio, seeks services of a ***pastor*** committed to serving faithfully according to God's Word. Small congregation of 75 in recently expanded facility with anticipation of growth through outreach.
  Contact Judy Hartman, 937-667-0287.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for two part-time positions teaching ***K-8 Spanish*** and ***junior high language arts*** (these could be combined to create a full-time position). Lake Center is a K-8 school of 380 students in the Akron/Canton area.
  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **Frazer Mennonite Church**, located in suburban Philadelphia, is seeking a half-time ***minister of children and youth***. Frazer Mennonite Church is a compassionate community walking with Christ toward peace and wholeness. This is an opportunity to creatively expand existing programs and develop new ideas in meeting the needs of children and youth.
  Please contact Jason Kuniholm at 610-644-3397 or <jasonholm9@cs.com> for application and further information.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, Newton, Kan., seeks full-time, salaried ***manager*** for well-established store. For information, contact Donovan Bachman, 620-327-4601; Bill Mason, 620-327-4157; or Melanie Mueller, 316-835-2126.

- **Gulfhaven Mennonite Church**, Gulfport, Miss., ***80th anniversary celebration:*** "Praising God & Moving On." Guest speaker: Palmer Becker. Mark your calendars for Sept. 7-9, 2001. Information: 228-328-0045; <conradpr@juno.com>.

- **Drift Creek Conference and Retreat Center**, on the beautiful Oregon coast, Lincoln City, seeks an ***administrative director or co-administrators***. Drift Creek Camp is located in the Oregon Coast Range Mountains, 13 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Full-time, year-round position, beginning Jan. 1, 2002. Responsible for administration, program planning, development, staff and volunteer coordination. Prior related experience desired.
  For additional information and application materials, contact Gwen Peachy, 2713 NW Arnold Way, Corvallis, OR 97330; 541-754-6336; <gpeachey@yahoo.com>.

- **Is God urging you** to use your leadership abilities, management skills and three years of cross-cultural experience to ***serve others through MCC***? MCC needs people to provide leadership, starting this year or early 2002, in El Salvador, Ethiopia, Zambia, Congo, Colombia, south Florida, Vietnam, Laos, Philippines, Egypt and Sudan. MCC will need leaders, starting in spring/summer 2002, for these locations: Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Tanzania, Bolivia, southeast Europe and South Africa/Lesotho/Swaziland. Plan ahead. Apply now!
  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>; or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks ***chief operating officer/office and business manager***. Expectations and qualifications: (1) committed Christian with vision for discipling urban youth; (2) excellent management skills; (3) good communication skills; (4) training/experience in financial record-keeping, accounting; (5) experience or willingness to learn fund-raising skills. Responsibilities: prepare and monitor budget; implement development; organize and oversee office records and information systems; implement student process; reports directly to the Board; salary to be negotiated.
  Interested people should contact Mark Garis, Board Chair, 504 Swartley Rd., Hatfield, PA 19440; 215-822-9795; <markgaris@aol.com>.

For a gift subscription call 800-790-2498.

[illegible] resources

by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Building Together: Developing Your Blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry by Carol Duerksen (Faith & Life Resources, 2001, $12.95) offers creative approaches to youth ministry that take seriously the needs of youth, the life of the congregation and the changing culture we live in.

The St. Matthew Passion: A Text for Voices by John Reeves (Eerdmans, 2001, $14) includes 21 verse meditations inspired by Johann Sebastian Bach's masterpiece. The verse texts, linked by short prose introductions, explore the tradition of liturgical responses to the Passion, reflect on the role of the Passion in the creative and spiritual life of Bach and convey Reeve's own experiences of hearing Bach's music in cities around the world.

Singing: A Mennonite Voice by Marlene Kropf and Kenneth Nafziger (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) is a collection of stories and reflections from ordinary Mennonite worshipers throughout North America. The scores of interviews show that singing is a Mennonite sacrament.

J.D. Martin (a.k.a. Jerry Derstine) has released a CD of two of his songs: "Unity" and "Jesus, Rock of Ages" (#515 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*). He performs each song three times (including singalong tracks). Cost is $10, plus $2 shipping and handling. Order from JD Martin, 5906 Cantaloupe Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401; 818-781-6240; <jd@jdmartin.ws>.

Separate and Peculiar: Old Order Mennonite Life in Ontario by Isaac R. Horst (Herald Press, 2001, $13.99) explains the customs, beliefs and culture of his people in Ontario—in English and in Pennsylvania German. It includes black-and-white drawings illustrating a typical farm home, arrangements for a wedding, a Mennonite meetinghouse, a barn raising, buggies and clothing details.

The Storykeepers (Faith & Values Media, 2001) is an animated adventure series showing on Odyssey every Sunday at 8 p.m. ET/PT. A group of children is on the run from persecution in Nero's Rome. While hiding them in his bakery, Ben tells them stories of a man they call Jesus of Nazareth. Video copies are available from Faith & Values Media, 800-727-3480.

The Work of Love: Creation as Kenosis, edited by John Polkinghorne (Eerdmans, 2001, $22), explores the nature of the creative love of God. The key concept, "kenosis" (or "self-emptying"), refers to God's voluntary restriction of the divine infinity in order to allow room for the existence of finite creatures who are truly free to be themselves.

The Politics of the Cross: The Theology and Social Ethics of John Howard Yoder by Craig A. Carter (Brazos Press, 2001, $18.99) is the first systematic treatment of the Mennonite theologian's extensive writings. Carter argues that Yoder's radical social ethic is derived from a classically orthodox Christianity.

Nevada Desert Experience in the Nuclear Age, produced by Lovarchy-Shalom (2000, 25-minute video, $15 postpaid), summarizes the history of U.S.-based efforts to abolish nuclear weapons. To order, contact Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 46645, Las Vegas, NV 89114; <www.NevadaDesertExperience.org>.

Firstfruits Giving: Funding Our Vision Together by Mark Vincent is a three-lesson curriculum available free for use in congregations. The three lessons are designed to introduce households and congregations to the new funding system for Mennonite Church USA. Those interested can download *Firstfruits Giving* from the Mennonite Church USA web site at <www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org> or order a sample copy from Kathryn Rodgers at 219-294-7131, <Krodgers@MennoniteUSA.org>.

Recommended reading

Getting Home Before Dark: Stories of Wisdom for All Ages **by Peter J. Dyck (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) is a collection of bite-sized chapters on topics of particular interest to older readers. Yet Dyck's simple storytelling and wry wisdom span generations, as the subtitle promises. Dyck writes out of a lifetime of experiences that are not only engaging but useful. The chapter "Six Sources of Family Strength" is a case in point. You come away from this book feeling encouraged rather than lectured to.—*gh***

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Everett J. Thomas

Thank you, Lee ...

With the Nashville 2001 convention, Lee Snyder concludes her two-year stint as the first moderator of Mennonite Church USA. Anyone following the process of merging General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church structures into a transformed Mennonite Church USA will know that hers has not been an easy time to lead. But she carried her responsibilities with gentleness, resolve and integrity.

From the beginning at St. Louis 99 when Lee was called by the church to be the first moderator of these merging bodies, the task has been challenging. Many delegates left that convention angry, frustrated, confused or disheartened. Since it was the Executive Board's responsibility to press on, and Lee was chair of that board, the pressures landed squarely on her shoulders. But even getting the new Executive Board functioning in the early meetings was tough.

First, weather problems dogged three of the first four meetings of the Executive Board. A fall hurricane moving up the East Coast wreaked havoc with flights into the first meeting, held near Baltimore. The next meeting was in Chicago in the winter; a blizzard closed O'Hare Airport. Several of us at the meeting asked Lee if she thought God was trying to send a message about forming this new denomination. Her response was, "I don't even want to go there!"

But there were challenges as great as the weather. The new Executive Board had been designed to lead in a way that was new to both denominations. That required extensive corporate training for all board and staff members at the same time they were learning to know each other personally.

Lee was providing this leadership while holding down a full-time job: president of Bluffton (Ohio) College. But even with such a full plate, she reached out with words of affirmation and encouragement to all.

I experienced Lee's quiet but encouraging leadership one day several months after beginning this job as editor. After reading my January editorial which anticipated the new year, Lee sent an email expressing her appreciation. "I've been keeping your column here for early morning meditation," she wrote, "along with my Nashville mug reminding me of Colossians 3:12-17."

I also had the opportunity to observe Lee managing the Executive Board—a collection of articulate and strong leaders. Even when the agenda seemed far greater than the time allotted, seldom was there any sense of panic. Usually the issues were treated with just the right amount of attention and time.

In many ways, the momentum building in the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church issues from this kind leadership. Of course, there were others who contributed to the cause, but final responsibility for the past two years rests ultimately on the Executive Board and its leader.

There is much work ahead for the next moderator and the Executive Board. But the nonanxious presence Lee brought to her task has served the church in ways most will never see. Through her leadership, the new Mennonite Church USA is on a trajectory of strength and growth. Thank you, Lee, for your leadership of the past two years.—*ejt*

Well done, good and trustworthy servants. Enter into the joy of your master.

—Matthew 25:21 NRSV (adapted)

... and Dotty

Dotty Anderson, secretary for *The Mennonite,* has worked at Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale, Pa., for 42 years. She has served as a billing clerk, a computer operator and secretary. On July 12 she retires.

Dotty has faithfully managed a myriad of details for periodicals such as *Gospel Herald, Christian Living* and *The Mennonite*, including punctual payments to writers and photographers.

Dotty describes herself as a peon in the corporate culture at MPH. She is shy and does not like the limelight. But when it feels safe, she will offer her opinion and an occasional wry observation.

We will miss Dotty and pray God's rich blessings on the next chapter of her life. To paraphrase Matthew 25:21, may she hear the Lord saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."—*staff of* The Mennonite

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July 17, 2001

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Nashville 2001 in stories and photos

Liturgical dancers during the opening worship service at the Nashville convention interpret the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

God's Spirit creates a new church

God's Spirit broods over the church

Convention gives birth to Mennonite Church USA

From liturgical dance signifying the flames of Pentecost (cover), to a worship leader speaking in tongues, God's Spirit brooded over the July 2-7 convention in Nashville, Tenn., where a new denomination emerged from General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

From a young woman's sermon that sparked a standing ovation, to a musical mission celebration on the stage of the Grand Ole Opry, God's Spirit danced through worship services and delegate sessions alike.

From the hush that followed the announcement that the merger plan for Mennonite Church USA had passed with overwhelming support, to hundreds of youth making a commitment to Jesus Christ in youth convention worship, God's Spirit transformed GCs and MCs into Mennonite Church USA.

The elusive winds of God's Spirit danced through an amazing tapestry of worship, discernment, seminars, service projects and recreation. For those who were present as well as those who were not, this issue of *The Mennonite* attempts to convey the joys and surprises of Nashville 2001.

The watershed day for delegates was Thursday, July 5. Two votes would determine the state of the new denomination. When the results of the vote on the plan of merger were announced by moderator Lee Snyder, the 2,000 delegates and observers fell silent.

Earlier in the week, before these votes, there were signs that convention participants were eager to get on with the mission of the church.

When the Grand Ole Opry filled on Tuesday evening to launch the Mennonite Mission Network (the name of the new mission agency), an estimated 1,000 Nashville residents and tourists joined 3,000 Mennonites for a feast of music and mission messages.

The next morning, in the adult worship service, Irene Mendoza, from La Puente, Calif., called the church to build on the foundation in 1 Corinthians 3:11 (see column at left). Describing the verse as Menno Simons' favorite, Mendoza declared, "If this [foundation] is good enough for Menno Simons, it's good enough for me!"

> "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" … If this [foundation] is good enough for Menno Simons, it's good enough for me!
>
> —*Irene Mendoza*

Roma Eicher and Noel Santiago, prayer team leaders, are surrounded on stage by children during a July 5 worship service as they hold aloft baskets filled with written prayers.

Interrupted often by applause during her sermon, the adults nearly leapt to their feet as she concluded.

But the defining moment of this convention occurred late Thursday afternoon. So overwhelming was the vote margin in favor of forming the new church that delegates sat in awe as the enormity of the moment washed through the room.

As if to assure the new church of God's presence, Seferina DeLeon, a worship leader from Goshen, Ind., spoke in a prophetic tongue during Friday's adult worship.

"My children, I love you," DeLeon interpreted. "Focus on Me so I can teach you. I want to prepare you to do the work I have for you."

The miracle that transformed the church in Nashville did not happen in a vacuum. Clearly the Executive Board and the Constituency Leaders Council were effective in their efforts to build unity across the church over the past two years. Duane Yoder, pastor of Bay Shore Mennonite Church in Sarasota, Fla., said it best after the historic votes.

"The leaders did it right this time," Yoder said. "Without being dogmatic they were declarative about the positions of the church. By not allowing us to make amendments (to membership guidelines and the plan of merger) they kept us from squabbling. By enhancing the spirit of worship they got us to focus on the mission of the church."—*Everett J. Thomas*

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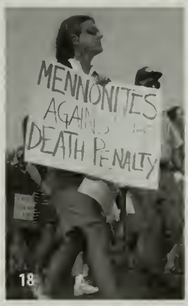
Vol. 4, No. 27, July 17, 2001



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Cover photo, and all photos unless otherwise noted, are by Dale D. Gehman. Stories for this special issue were written by staff members Rich Preheim and Gordon Houser and freelance writers Duane S. Stoltzfus, Celia Lehman and David Hiebert. Some material was used from *Grace Notes*, the Nashville 2001 daily news sheet.

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

Vote volunteers: Convention volunteers compile delegate ballots to be counted on one of the proposals for merging the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. GC delegates voted using green ballots, while MC delegates used white ballots.

Born on the Fifth of July

Delegates finalize creation of Mennonite Church USA with surprising ease.

by Rich Preheim

In Christ there is no East or West. There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. And now there will be no Mennnite Church (MC) or General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

In surprisingly overwhelming fashion, GC and MC delegates on Thursday, July 5, took the final steps of an 18-year process to transform their denominations into Mennonite Church USA. In the first of two actions needed to complete the merger, 90 percent of GC delegates and 89 percent of MC delegates adopted the much-debated membership guidelines in the morning. In the afternoon, 96 percent of GC delegates and 95 percent of MC delegates approved the plan of merger, which covers the legal aspects of the move.

The actions, taken at the joint MC-GC convention in Nashville, Tenn., July 2-7, write the final chapters for the General Conference Mennonite Church, founded in 1860, and the Mennonite Church, organized in 1898, and their decades of cooperation. Mennonite Church USA is to be incorporated by Aug. 31, and the bylaws will go into effect Feb. 1, 2002.

The strength of the measures' votes was in stark contrast to the past decade, during which the merger process had been plagued by conflicts over homosexuality and denominational membership. But at Nashville, delegates repeatedly said that they were ready to go forward with the work of the church, despite their disagreements.

"I strongly urge all of us to move beyond this point," said Marion Schrock, MC delegate from Pacific Northwest Conference, which in 1994 became one of the first two U.S. integrated area conferences. "The future holds only good things for God's people."

The future holds only good things for God's people.

—Marion Schrock

Membership guidelines vote

General Conference Mennonite Church
928 yes (90 percent), 107 no, 13 abstentions

Mennonite Church
223 yes (89 percent), 28 no, 1 abstention

Plan of merger vote

General Conference Mennonite Church
978 yes (96 percent), 41 no, 9 abstentions

Mennonite Church
233 yes (95 percent), 13 no, 3 abstentions

Said Dagne Assefa, an MC delegate from Indiana-Michigan Conference, "I want to move on and not dwell on this [homosexuality/membership] issue."

The delegates' desire to do so "probably exceeded our first hopes," said Lee Snyder, the outgoing Mennonite Church USA moderator.

"Today [July 5] represents an evidence of God's Spirit with the prayers of countless people and the confirmation that we have a commitment to be Mennonite Church USA and to embrace our differences and get on with our mission," she said.

Not that those differences weren't evident. Some delegates advocated for greater accep-

Today represents an evidence of God's Spirit with the prayers of countless people and the confirmation that we have a commitment to be Mennonite Church USA and to embrace our differences and get on with our mission.—*Lee Snyder*

tance of noncelibate homosexuals in the church, while other delegates called for a stronger denominational position against homosexuality. Still others expressed concern that the membership guidelines' controversial third section focused too heavily on homosexuality to the exclusion of other sins.

But those disagreements over such deep-seated issues have been difficult to address. "We affirm the [membership] guidelines as the best we can do at this time," said Tammerie Spires, GC delegate from Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas. "We need to realize every community has voices of dissent."

Church leaders were heartened by the similarities in MC and GC votes. "That says we have a firm foundation on which to build one church," Snyder said. "We're not far apart in our previous denominational affiliations."

Such votes have, in fact, been the rule since the two denominations first started considering uniting. At the first joint GC-MC convention, Bethlehem 83, about 90 percent of all delegates voted for a resolution on "Inter-Mennonite Cooperation in North America," which formally started the merger process. Six years later, at Normal, Ill., GC delegates voted 87 percent and MC delegates voted 86 percent for "deliberate exploration" of joining the two denominations. And two years ago, at St. Louis, 90 percent of GC delegates and 89 percent of MC delegates approved measures calling for the creating of Mennonite Church USA.

"I just think that's remarkable, a gift from God," said Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director.

The creation of Mennonite Church USA came one day after the Fourth of July, commemorating the creation of the United States. On that day, GC and MC delegates provided a foretaste of their merger decision by accepting with only a handful of dissenting votes a measure prohibiting amendments to the two merger proposals.

While many delegates expressed discomfort with the general idea of not allowing amendments, they said the merger votes were an unusual situation.

"Our group does not want to move backward; we want to move forward," said John Johnson, GC delegate from Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan. "[The no-amendments] request by the leadership has a reason and ... for that reason is in the best interest of the conference."

Other delegates cited the efforts in the past two years to solicit input from all congregations and to discuss the membership guidelines in the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC). "Counsel has been sought and people have had chances to give their opinions," said Flo Harnish, GC delegate from Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

In addition to a growing trust in denominational leadership and the groundwork laid by initiatives such as the CLC, conventiongoers also credited the merger's success to the delegates' table discussions. The MC and GC delegate assemblies conducted separate sessions on July 3, the first day of business. But for the rest of the convention, they were mixed around tables, rather than sitting in rows of chairs and speaking to each other only through statements at microphones.

Motion notion: Yvonne Bailey, Mennonite Church delegate from the African-American Mennonite Association, presents the motion to adopt the membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA.

"They are beginning to get to know each other as persons and individuals, not as MCs and GCs," Snyder said.

Nevertheless, the outcome of the merger actions will result in membership losses among conservative sections of the new church. Bob Gerhart, pastor of Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa., announced his congregation will not join Mennonite Church USA because of the "failure to have an authentic word" on homosexuality.

"If it's not yet settled, we cannot be part of it," he said.

Reporting on discussions at his table, Randy Evers, MC delegate from South Central Conference, said, "We may have lost two churches and a pastor as a result of this ... vote."

Those prospects generated concerns for the future of Mennonite Church USA. "With the very strong vote [for the merger] at 90 percent, we may have silenced the other 10 percent in our midst," said Peter Wiebe, GC delegate from Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz. "How can we encourage them to be part of us?"

Myron Augsburger, MC delegate from

Continued on page 6

Last convention was the largest

Nashville 2001, the final joint convention of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, was the largest gathering ever of U.S. Mennonites.

The July 2-7 event drew 9,203 registrants for adult, youth, junior high and children's activities. The last convention, at St. Louis in 1999, had 9,698 people in attendance, but that included Canadians. They have since created their own church body and did not send any participants to Nashville except for a few youth groups from Ontario.

The registration breakdown: 6,012 youth and sponsors, 2,563 adults, 373 children and 255 junior high youth.

The next convention, which will be the first for the new Mennonite Church USA, will be held in Atlanta in 2003.

Born on the Fifth of July
continued from page 5

Every head bowed: J.R. Burkholder (left), General Conference Mennonite Church delegate from Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., and Warren Tyson, Mennonite Church delegate from Atlantic Coast Conference, join other delegates in prayer during a business session at Nashville 2001. Delegates overwhelmingly approved the final two measures necessary to complete the transformation of the two denominations into Mennonite Church USA.

Virginia Conference, urged the new church to "be as fair to the people on the right as we seem to be to the people on the left."

All current GC and MC congregations will have opportunity to vote on the merger. Because the GC assembly is composed of congregational delegates, all GC congregations automatically become members of Mennonite Church USA unless they decide otherwise. Because the MC assembly is composed of area conference delegates, MC conferences will need to take separate action with the congregational delegates to their area conference assemblies. MC conferences have until Feb. 1, 2002, to choose to become charter members of Mennonite Church USA. Otherwise they will automatically become provisional members for as long as five years, until they decide to either join or withdraw from the new denomination.

Eight MC conferences have already chosen to become charter members—Central Plains, Franconia, Gulf States, Indiana-Michigan, Ohio, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest and Rocky Mountain—while Franklin and Southeast conferences have opted for provisional membership.

Given current MC and GC membership totals, Mennonite Church USA membership would be 116,000, easily making it the largest Mennonite denomination in the world.

Merger creates largest group

Time will tell if Mennonite Church USA is better than its predecessors. But it is indisputably bigger. In fact, the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church has created the largest Mennonite denomination in the world.

The second largest denomination is Communauté Mennonite au Congo with an estimated 85,000 members, according to Mennonite World Conference. The next largest is also in Congo, Communauté des Eglises de Frères Mennonites au Congo with 77,000 members.

Ethiopia's Meserete Kristos Church and North American Old Order Amish each have about 73,000 members.

Mennonite Church Canada is the largest Canadian group, with 37,000 members, followed by the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches with 33,000. In the United States, the second largest denomination is the 22,000-member U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

From Iowa to Georgia: transformation timeline, 1860-2003

1860 The General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) organized at West Point, Iowa

1898 The Mennonite Church (MC) born in Wakarusa, Ind., with first denominational delegate assembly

1920 The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church join other North American Mennonite groups to create Mennonite Central Committee.

1940 The Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church begin participation in Civilian Public Service.

1959 The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church establish Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Ind.

1983 The Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church meet in Bethlehem, Pa., for their first joint convention, where delegates ratify a resolution on "Inter-Mennonite Cooperation in North America."

1989 GC and MC delegates, meeting in Normal, Ill., for their second joint convention, ratify exploring the merger of the two denominations.

1995 GC and MC delegates meet jointly in Wichita, Kan., and agree to merge.

1999 MC, GC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada delegates meet jointly in St. Louis and approve further merger recommendations, including the transformation of their denominations into Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada.

2001 In the last joint GC-MC convention, delegates meeting in Nashville, Tenn., approve measures to finalize the merger of the two denominations.

2003 The first scheduled convention of Mennonite Church USA, to be held in Atlanta

Now what?

Their transformation work complete, delegates dream of church's future.

by Rich Preheim

Nashville 2001 delegates repeatedly said they were anxious to get out of the mire of homosexuality and membership and get on with the work of doing and being the church. They finally got their chance on Friday, July 6.

The day after approving the measures to complete the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church into Mennonite Church USA, GC and MC delegates spent their business sessions on their dreams and concerns for this new creation.

"We want to become an audible people, sharing the core values of our faith, and not be known as the quiet in the land anymore," said Richard Gehring, GC delegate from Manhattan (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

For many delegates, their thinking was stimulated by the oft-touted concept of the missional church, witnessing to Christ both locally and globally.

"We are really looking forward to the missional aspect of this church," said Amy Nissley, MC delegate from Central Plains Conference. "There is a great desire to work in the communities around us."

Kathi Oswald, GC delegate from Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif., encouraged the missional Mennonite Church to "share the gospel of Jesus Christ to bring people to church as well as to spread our message of peace and justice."

But that calling only highlighted the challenges facing the fledgling denomination. One was literally changing the look of the church, as a number of delegates expressed the wish to include more people of color. Tanya Ramer Wenger, GC delegate from Madison (Wis.) Mennonite Fellowship, suggested "that all Mennonite literature automatically be translated into Spanish and, I would add, other languages."

At the same time, some delegates lamented the absence of those who had once been part of their assemblies. "We deeply miss our Canadian brothers and sisters and want to preserve that relationship and that accountability," said Jim Amstutz, GC delegate from West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Another challenge was to continue encouraging the pacifist position. "We would like the church to achieve a greater peace role in all generations," said Kendal Warkentine, GC delegate from Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan. "Peace is right because that is what God has called us to."

Border crossing: Mennonite Church Canada moderator Ron Sawatsky presents Mennonite Church USA moderator Lee Snyder with a pitcher and basin commemorating the final approval of the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church and symbolizing the continued partnership between the new denomination and Mennonite Church Canada.

Said Mary Ellen Meyer, MC delegate from Indiana-Michigan Conference, "We wonder if we need to be more concerned about resources on peace and peace theology."

During the convention, many participants lauded the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) for its role in helping bring the membership guidelines to approval. Maybe that group could assist in other issues, suggested Ron Adams, an MC delegate from Lancaster Conference, which is struggling with the question of women as pastors.

"I would encourage the CLC to organize an interconference dialogue on women in leadership," he said.

Other delegates cautioned the new church—easily the largest U.S. Mennonite denomination—not to lose perspective and overlook the Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical Mennonite Church and others. "We'd like to preserve the awareness of other Mennonite churches that are not part of Mennonite Church USA," said Sharon Kennel, MC delegate from Central Plains Conference.

With the calls for greater outward evidence of faithfulness also came calls for such expressions to be rooted in Scripture and spiritual discipline "so that our mission and life don't become detached from the River of Life that flows within," said Mathew Swora, GC delegate from Emmanuel Mennonite Church, St. Paul, Minn.

Said Sue Miller, MC delegate from Indiana-Michigan Conference, "Preserve the authority of Scripture as we become more missional."

While the dreaming and envisioning generated excitement among convention participants, the foundational challenge will be to build on that if Mennonite Church USA is to reach its potential. Said Kenneth Thompson, MC delegate from Atlantic Coast Conference, "Be sure to take the enthusiasm back and communicate the things that have happened here."

Positions filled for next biennium

For the past two years, Ervin Stutzman was the first Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect, serving with moderator Lee Snyder. Now Stutzman, of Harrisonburg, Va., becomes the first moderator of the officially merged church.

Delegates affirmed Duane Oswald of Fresno, Calif., as moderator-elect.

Also elected were Mennonite Church USA Executive Board members Elaine Bryant of Chicago; Edith J. Landis of Telford, Pa.; Olivette McGhee of Atmore, Ala.; Harold Miller of Corning, N.Y.; Sue E. Miller of Middlebury, Ind.; Nancy Rodriguez-Lora of Brooklyn, N.Y.; and Sharon Waltner of Parker, S.D.

Victims at home, abroad, unborn

Delegates pass three resolutions but not without a challenge on abortion.

by Rich Preheim

As Nashville 2001 delegates adopted three resolutions against various forms of violence, it was those victims who weren't mentioned that spawned the most discussion.

The delegates on Saturday, July 7, easily approved resolutions on the conflicts in Colombia and the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. But a resolution against the death penalty drew calls for also including a hard line against abortion.

Protesting the deaths of a comparatively few convicted criminals while ignoring the millions of abortions conducted each year is like "straining out gnats by swallowing a camel," said David Clymer, Mennonite Church delegate from Allegheny Conference.

> We must educate the public that violence is not the panacea we are taught it [is].
>
> *—Leah Anne Alcazar*

After further editorial changes were suggested, the measure was returned to the resolutions committee for revisions. But the committee refused to add any reference to abortion, citing existing statements on the issue adopted by the Mennonite Church (MC) in 1975 and the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) in 1980.

The revised resolution passed with a handful of dissenters. It urges denominational leaders and members "appeal to state and federal governments to abolish the death penalty … through prayer, letter writing and public vigils." The revised version includes references to the grief suffered by the families of murder victims as well as the families of those killed by the death penalty.

But Elaine Bryant, MC delegate from Illinois Conference and a Chicago pastor, argued for the resolution to address "neighborhoods under seige" by gangs, where murders—and subsequent death-penalty convictions—are too common.

"I don't think this [resolution] goes far enough," she said.

John Otto, MC delegate from South Central Conference, argued for the resolution by citing last month's execution of Juan Raul Garza, the former son-in-law of of longtime Mennonite pastor Conrado Hinojosa.

"We the people are killling approximately two people every week in the name of justice," Otto said. "We need to call on our leaders to stop this barbaric practice."

Added Leah Ann Alcazar, an MC delegate from Pacific Southwest Conference and a prosecuting attorney, "We must educate the public that violence is not the panacea we are taught it [is]."

The resolution on Vieques was marked by

Hard at Worshipful Work: Brenda Glanzer Lilliston (second from right) discusses a matter of convention business with Mennonite Church moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman (left to right), moderator Lee Snyder and Jonathan Smith. Lilliston, of Wichita, Kan., and Smith, of South Hutchinson, Kan., were Worshipful Work facilitators for Nashville 2001, helping keep participants attuned to God's leading during the business sessions.

Speak into the mike: Elmer Neufeld, General Conference Mennonite Church delegate from Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church, addresses the delegates at Nashville 2001.

the absence of H.A. Penner, GC delegate from Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church. Instead of attending Nashville 2001 as planned, he was serving a 20-day sentence in Puerto Rico for trespassing on Vieques in May. Penner was one of four members of a Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) delegation arrested in the demonstration against the U.S. Navy's bombing exercises on the island.

Nels Hostetter, another GC delegate from Akron, read an email from Penner.

The resolution, which passed without dissent, calls on the U.S. government to immediately stop military activity on Vieques, remove the Navy from the island, clean it and support reconstruction efforts there.

"We as a body here in Nashville have an obligation to support this resolution to be part of the solution in Vieques," said Steve Ratzlaff, GC delegate from First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, Neb., and a member of a CPT delegation to the island in January.

The resolution on Colombia also passed without dissent. It opposes the U.S. government's recent Plan Colombia with its $3 billion in aid, which Colombian Mennonites fear will only escalate the country's half century of civil unrest. Most of the aid is to go to the Colombian military as part of a counter-narcotics plan.

"We believe that Plan Colombia does not adequately address the long-standing problems of poverty, injustice and violence," the resolution says.

It further calls for nonviolent strategies to address Colombia's problems and efforts to reduce U.S. demand for illegal drugs, which is helping fuel the country's instability.

Myron Augsburger, MC delegate from Virginia Conference, urged more such statements on the world's hotspots. "We need one similar with respect to Sudan," he said, and also one for Palestine.

Nashville numbers

55,314

Square feet of the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center's largest ballroom, the site of the Nashville 2001 youth convention.

14,420

Number of beds in the Opryland.

4,561

Volunteer days worked by participants in the convention's Servant Projects.

1,158

Passengers on the boat rides around the Opryland's indoor Delta Island on Monday, July 2, about 300 more passengers than normal.

224

Number of pages in the Nashville 2001 delegate workbook.

221

Age in months of the youngest delegate at Nashville, Ethan Houser, General Conference Mennonite Church delegate from New Creation Fellowship Church, Newton, Kan.

112

Tables set up for General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates to meet around during worship and business sessions.

88, 87

Percent of Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church delegates, respectively, who voted for all nominees on the ballot of candidates for denominational board positions.

85

Percent of Opryland guests July 2-7 associated with the convention.

66

Total number of General Conference Mennonite Church delegate assemblies attended by J. Herbert and Helen Fretz, Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., and David Habegger, Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind., who have each attended every GC assembly since 1941.

10

Countries other than the United States represented by Nashville 2001 registrants: Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Ethopia, India, Kenya, Paraguay, Peru, Sweden and Trinidad.

Called together … sent out: Sharing Communion at the closing worship are (from left) worship leader Seferina DeLeon, song leader Janeen Bertsche Johnson, speaker Janet Plenert and worship leader Matt Friesen.

Worship together

A growing variety of worship styles emerges at Nashville 2001.

by Gordon Houser

Worship at Nashville 2001 both paved the way for the unity voted on during the week and hinted at the current and coming diversity within Mennonite Church USA.

Following the convention theme, "In Christ, Held Together" (Colossians 3:12-17), and drawing on texts from Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, Acts, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians, the adult worship services used drama, dance, comedy as well as music and sermons to unite people in praise.

Seferina DeLeon, a soloist and songwriter from Goshen, Ind., who has been active in congregations and in the Hispanic Mennonite Convention, and Matt Friesen, pastor of Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church and a member of the planning and worship committees for Nashville 2001, led the adult worship times, which were held each morning, following the opening worship on Monday night, July 2.

William Eash, professor and director of choral activities at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., led the hymn singing. Helping with the music were Pentecost, a worship band from Norristown (Pa.) New Life Mennonite Church, pianist Andrea Welty Peachey, a music teacher in Enfield, Conn., and singer Lois and guitarist Tom Harder, co-pastors of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Drama and dance: The worship services used drama and dance to illustrate and enhance the Scripture texts. Karmen Krahn Fehr, a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., wrote and performed the morning dramas, with assistance on Wednesday and Saturday from Malinda Berry, Raul Bogoya, Teresa Dutchersmith, Dennis Fehr, Barry and Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Cynthia Good Kaufmann, Ann Birky Koehn and Karl Shelly. Stephanie Bartsch, a student at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va., choreographed the liturgical dances. Other dancers, all from Harrisonburg, included Kristen Kennedy, Greta Horst, Melodie Bomberger and Tara Kreider. Lorie and Brent Hershey of Harrisonburg accompanied them.

Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God: Pentecost, a worship band from Norristown (Pa.) New Life Mennonite Church, helped lead singing and praises.

Worship speakers call for unity

Mennonites have been treated as strangers … but ironically, we have all too often not welcomed others.

—Stephen Reid and Kathy Goering Reid

At Monday evening's opening worship, Ted & Lee, a comedy duo from Harrisonburg, presented three skits based on Bible stories—"Tower of Babel," "Pentecost" and "What now?"—to show God's work of bringing unity out of diversity. The liturgical dance team interpreted the events of Acts 2 in "Tongues of Fire."

Tuesday morning's worship included a confession, words of assurance from Ephesians 2, followed by participants anointing one another with oil.

Strangers: Stephen Reid and Kathy Goering Reid, pastors at Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church, spoke on "Joined Together … No Longer Strangers." Mennonites have been treated as strangers, they said, "but ironically, we have all too often not welcomed others."

The morning's worship on Wednesday focused on "Working Together … Building on the Foundation of Christ," based on 1 Corinthians 3:3-13.

Irene Mendoza, youth pastor at the House of the Lord Mennonite Church, LaPuente, Calif., encouraged people to examine their stories for faith and for failure. She recalled a January 1994 earthquake, when her husband, Rafael, leaned over their 10-day-old son to protect him from falling debris. While some may feel as if the merger is an earthquake, she said, we will be all right "if the foundation remains intact, the Rock of Rocks, the Rock of Ages, our Lord Jesus Christ."

Irene received applause several times during her talk, and as she concluded, the gathered assembly gave her a standing ovation.

Music: A skit introduced each sermon during the week, and music framed the presentations. Dance also marked several worship times. On Thursday, two Native dancers—Jerry Billiot Lonewolf and Bryant Billiot Talking Leaf, members of the Dulac band of Biloxi-Chitimacha Indians—performed a sacred dance before Steve Cheramie Risingsun spoke on "Gathered Together … Awaiting Blessing."

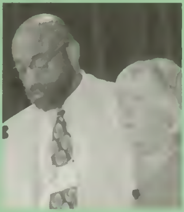
Steve, pastor of Poarch Community Church, Atmore, Ala., and a member of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Houma tribe, referred to Jesus' warning in Luke 6 to not judge. "When we

continued on page 12

Comedy duo Ted & Lee (Ted Swartz, left, and Lee Eshleman), speakers for Monday evening's worship, act out a scene from the building of the Tower of Babel.

Bringing people together does not erase their differences.

—Stephen Reid and Kathy Goering Reid



Our differences will lead us to complete, not compete in, God's kingdom.

—Irene Mendoza

God takes no pleasure in his children fighting.

—Steve Cheramie Risingsun

If you can't speak the truth in love, keep it to yourself.

—Chuck Neufeld

We are neither MC nor GC but [a people called to follow] JC.

—Janet Plenert

United in praise: Pianist Andrea Welty Peachey plays a new rendition of "Jesus Loves Me."

Worship together

continued from page 11

judge, we presume to know God's mind." He compared the gathered delegates to Moses at the edge of the Red Sea. "Delegates and board members," he said, "it is your responsibility to lead us into what God has for us."

Children joined the adults from their convention (see page 22) at the beginning of Friday morning's worship. Katrina Toews, Washington, accompanied by Tom Harder on guitar, gave a haunting interpretive dance.

Saints: In his talk, "Knit Together … Equipped for Ministry," Chuck Neufeld, co-pastor of Community Mennonite Church, Markham, Ill., called on all who claim Jesus as Lord to live according to our call as saints. The message of Ephesians 4, he said, is that "since we are saints, let's act like it. … Behave yourselves."

The unity we are called to maintain, he said, goes beyond moving across General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church lines to unity in our families, in our congregations, across denominational lines, across cultures. Acting as one "will help rid us of racial and cultural domination," he said.

A beautiful diversity showed itself on the stage, providing a picture of the kind of church many want us to be.

At the end of Friday's worship, for perhaps the first time at a Mennonite assembly, a worship leader—Seferina DeLeon—spoke in tongues. She then interpreted the message to say, in part: "'O my mighty people, my precious saints. How I love you, and I desire for you to seek my face. Look to me for all you need. I am here,' saith the Lord."

Saturday's closing worship included a confession and an offering to support the Global Gift Sharing Project of Mennonite World Conference and expenses of transformation for Mennonite Church USA.

Janet Plenert, Elkhart, Ind., Latin America director for Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission, brought the message, "Called Together … Sent Out," based on Colossians 1.

She asked, "How can we be light in the world if we aren't nosy?" We have to get to know other people. We can't wait until we are ready before we reach out, she said. "God does not require expertise, only faithfulness."

She told of how the Mennonite church in Brazil, where she lived and worked, when facing inner turmoil, set its eyes on Jesus and sent out its first missionaries. "We are sent to be the hands and feet of Jesus," she said.

The worship, and the convention, closed with Communion, as worshipers gathered at tables and served one another pieces of bread dipped into a cup of juice.

Charismatic flavor: While much of the worship remained familiar to veteran conventiongoers, other elements were new. Seferina and the worship band Pentecost brought a more charismatic flavor of worship to the stage, one that may reflect more Hispanic and African-American congregations than predominantly white congregations.

While liturgical dance has been used, Nashville 2001 saw it used much more often. People had the opportunity to experience dance as an element of worship that enlarges our perspective on the Scripture being interpreted.

Some may have felt discomfort, but given the goals and the growth of Mennonite Church USA, the variety of worship styles will likely continue to develop. A beautiful diversity showed itself on the stage, providing a picture of the kind of church many want us to be. The worshipers on the floor, meanwhile, remained overwhelmingly white. Yet their enthusiasm revealed the desire to move toward being a group of worshipers like that pictured in Revelation 5:9b, with "saints from every tribe and language and people and nation."

One family: Duane and Elaine Maust, from Meridian, Miss., share Communion.

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A multicultural worship celebration

A feast of ethnic worship traditions

While the adult worship sessions at Nashville 2001 provided a variety of worship styles, they seemed merely a taste after attending a special celebration on Tuesday afternoon, July 3.

Titled "Beyond the Racial and Cultural Divide: A Multicultural Worship Celebration" and planned by the Minority Ministries Council, this session incorporated Native American, Hispanic and African-American worship traditions.

The worship included pulsing drums by Leo Hartshorn, a call to worship by John Powell, a Native American blessing by Steve Cheramie Risingsun, Colossians 3:12-17 read in three languages, numerous songs, a Native American dance and Communion. The Mennonite New Millennium Band performed songs, and John preached.

John said, "We are a new community," then added the adage: "I'm not what I want to be, but thank God I'm not what I used to be."

About 40 people attended the event.
—*Gordon Houser*

I'm not what I want to be, but thank God I'm not what I used to be.

—*John Powell*

Beyond the cultural divide: Bryant Billiot Talking Leaf (left) and his father, Jerry Billiot Lonewolf, perform a Native dance at the multicultural worship celebration at Nashville 2001.

Where two or three or more are gathered: More than 6,000 youth and their sponsors turned the Nashville 2001 youth convention site into a powerful place of worship.

High energy

The youth convention was a rush of music, movement and spiritual excitement.

by Marshall V. King

The favorite part is the worship, to think about 6,000 people all worshiping for one thing.

—Natalie Cotton

While the adults were doing worshipful work, the youth skipped straight to the worship. More than 6,000 youth and sponsors from across North America gathered in one room for 10 high-energy worship services at the Nashville 2001 youth convention.

When the doors opened before each session, youth ran to the front rows. When the 10-member praise band played, the young people stood and clapped and dance and sang. There were shouts praising God and conga lines streaming through the aisles.

But there was also silence as the speakers preached and as pianist and composer Ken Medema played songs which he improvised to summarize each service. But when those folks were done, applause erupted, and the energy was there again.

Natalie Cotton from Hartville, Ohio, said the youth convention was the best experience of her life. "The favorite part is the worship, to think about 6,000 people all worshiping for one thing," she said.

Mennonite Church USA moderator Lee Snyder told the youth at their first service, "We need to call on you occasionally to show us how to have some fun."

Following the theme "Get It Together in Christ," the week's speakers urged youth to evaluate their relationship with Jesus and challenged them to change their churches and communities.

On Tuesday morning, July 3, Nancy Rodriguez-Lora, an elder at United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, N.Y., and a member of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, told the youth God made them into divine works of art, loves them as they are and is calling them into his plan.

Mike Yaconelli, a 40-year youth worker, addressed the convention both Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. He spoke of barriers to God and how to break those down.

"You give God whatever you can give him," he said. "Something is better than nothing."

Mennonite peace evangelists Michael and Addie Banks, pastors of Glory Tabernacle in New York, on Thursday morning urged the youth to choose God and act with conviction, commitment, compassion and Christlike love as an alternative people.

"God desires to use you to manifest himself to the earth," Addie Banks said.

On Thursday evening, Shirley Showalter told of a dream in which she wanted to proclaim to students before she died of cancer. She wanted to tell them, "I am a member of a church that believes it is wrong to kill, it is wrong to hate and it is right to love."

In a room with clouds painted on the ceiling, Showalter and Mark DeVries spoke of the youth being surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. DeVries, a Presbyterian pastor from Nashville who spoke at Wednesday's joint worship service with adults, said it is the job of all people of God to surround the young people and midwife them into leadership in the church.

On Friday morning, Leslie Francisco, pastor of Calvary Community Church, Hampton, Va., called for "but-kickin' faith."

"You've got to kick the 'but' out of your life and stop making excuses why you can't do it," he said.

Mark Vincent, former director of the Giving Project, celebrated with the youth Friday night. He encouraged them to see themselves as God's treasure, save their virginity for marriage and celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit.

With the formation of Mennonite Church USA, the youth have been handed a clean slate, Vincent said. He dared them to tithe and be Christians on their knees with their hands raised to God. "I double dare you," he said.

Buster Soaries, a Baptist pastor from New Jersey, sent the youth out Saturday morning with a message of life. He compared people living without Christ to vampires—dead but still living, afraid of light and the sign of the cross.

"Six thousand people with Jesus in their hearts can turn North America upside down," he said.

In addition to the speakers, the services included dramas presented by students from Mennonite colleges, video presentations and direction from worship leaders Lana Miller, Marisa Cantu, both from Goshen, and Glen Guyton from Hampton.

Nina Ben-Tsvulun, a 15-year-old from Fort Wayne, Ind., said the week was different than church normally is.

As the Spirit moves: Youth convention participants get fully into worship.

"Everybody just had a lot of energy," she said. "When you see a lot of people so focused on God, it makes you want to be more [Christlike]."

Throughout the week, more than 4,500 youth and adults visited 28 locations to work on Servant Projects. Many of them focused on relational work with Nashville residents, but more than 1,800 people worked at Camp Dogwood, which will be used for environmental programs for inner-city youth next year.

Donna Gillroy, the camp's executive director, said they prayed for volunteers to help at the run-down camp; a month later the Mennonites showed up. "Be careful what you pray for," said a thrilled Gillroy.

For the past two years, a committee of 13 coordinators and 200 volunteers had been working on the youth convention. Conventions director Steven Francisco said there was a unity he hasn't sensed in other gatherings.

"It's almost like it's one big song," he said. "It's one big celebration."

Marshall V. King lives in Elkhart, Ind., and attends Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen.

I am a member of a church that believes it is wrong to kill, it is wrong to hate and it is right to love.

—*Shirley Showalter*

Taken for a ride: Gary Anderson gets a lift from youth convention participants David Stucky (center) and Jesse Nathan, both from Moundridge, Kan. Stucky and Nathan, who worked at the Kirkpatrick Community Center, were among more than 4,500 Nashville 2001 conventiongoers who worked at 27 locations around the city as part of Nashville 2001's Servant Projects. Sites included nursing homes, schools and food banks.

Songs for Worship

A mosaic of people and places

Clockwise from top left: Clair Hochstetler, a.k.a. Clair de Laney, does a random act of kindness to Katie Stoltzfus of Goshen, Ind.; Jerry Lonewolf Billiot performs a Native dance during Thursday's worship; Ertel Whigham, associate pastor of Norristown (Pa.) New Life Mennonite Church, plays saxophone for the worship team that led morning worships; Delta Island, part of the huge Opryland Hotel and Convention Center, where Nashville 2001 was held; a young convention-goer grabs some shut-eye; Pakisa Tshimika from Congo, director of Mennonite World Conference's Global Gifts Sharing Project, brings greetings to delegates; a young girl reads Scripture during the combined youth and adult worship on Peace Family Day.

Pilgrimage of reconciliation: Mennonites and local activists walk silently past the Tennessee Capitol on July 4, part of a protest march against the death penalty.

MENNONITES AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY
EXECUTION IS NOT THE SOLUTION

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Peace day on the Fourth of July

Peace family celebration provides an alternative to the national holiday.

by Gordon Houser

While the rest of the country was celebrating Independence Day, participants of Nashville 2001 took part in a variety of activities linked to Peace Family Day on July 4.

The Nashville, Tenn., Fellowship of Reconciliation with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), organized a "Pilgrimage of Reconciliation" against the death penalty.

About 140 people—slightly more than half of them Mennonites—gathered at the State Capitol in downtown Nashville. At 8:20 a.m., the sound of a bell called participants to 96 seconds of silence for the 94 men and two women on death row in Tennessee.

Not child's play: Kathy Railsback, a Christian Peacemaker Teams worker from Seattle, inspects a violent toy at K B Toys.

Then the group marched in silence approximately three miles to a park. The group stopped to sing and pray at the Bicentennial Mall (a site dedicated to the history of Tennessee, the NAACP/Neighborhood Justice Center (near Fisk University, which NAACP founder W.E.B. DuBois attended) and Jefferson Street Missionary Baptist Church (representing denominations with statements against the death penalty. At Hadley Park, near the Riverbend Maximum Security Prison, the group sang, prayed and listened to presentations from people working to change capital punishment laws.

Toy survey: CPT also sponsored a toy survey called "Violence Is Not Child's Play." After 45 minutes of training, six groups of volunteers visited six local toy retailers to rate the level of violence in toys marketed for children.

The inspection, which lasted 90 minutes, included assessing the percentage and placement of toys that portrayed or glorified violence, checking whether age restrictions (17+) for video games rated Mature (M) were enforced, and talking with the store manager about concerns raised by the inspection.

One store—Phillips Toy Mart—received a "commendable" rating, and one—K B Toys—was rated "toxic." Four others—Toys R Us, Target, Kmart and Wal-Mart—"need improvement," said CPT reservist Kathy Railsback of Seattle.

Lives of service
Susan Mark Landis of the Mennonite Church's Peace and Justice Committee (right) on July 4 presents a pitcher to Edgar and Ethel Yake Metzler, longtime workers for Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Board of Missions, in recognition of their service for peace and justice. Ethel also pioneered work against sexual abuse.

The dove [of peace] can only fly with [the wings of] liberation and reconciliation, which overcome victimization.

—Michael Banks

Peace family worship: The Commission on Home Ministries and the Peace and Justice Committee sponsored a peace family worship in the evening.

Doug and Jude Krehbiel of Road Less Travelled and J.D. Martin led in songs, and Michael Banks, pastor of Glory Tabernacle in Bronx, N.Y., and a Mennonite peace evangelist, gave a sermon titled "The Dove Will Fly."

"The cross," Michael said, "is the gravitational force that realigns us with God's will." Borrowing terms from author Walter Wink, he described the spread of the domination system. A dove needs two wings to fly, he added, and "the dove [of peace] can only fly with liberation and reconciliation, which overcome victimization."

God calls us to be "prophets and apostles of shalom," Michael said, which will require "the virtue of courage." And in a dig at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center, he said, "How odd that we talk about offering good news to the poor in the midst of opulence."

Children later paraded in costumes depicting leopards and lambs and other figures from the peaceable kingdom vision in Isaiah 9, as well as the children's own imaginations.

Recreation: Conventiongoers also had the option of picking up a picnic supper from food services and going to recreational events in the evening. Fun, fellowship and following Jesus replaced fireworks and the flag.

Bethany Swope and Grant Rissler contributed to this article.

Leopards and lambs: At the peace family worship, children celebrate Isaiah's vision of a peaceable kingdom.

Fun and fellowship: Nashville 2001 participants took part in recreational activities, including swimming, on July 4.

Harmony at the Opry House

Night of Mennonite music launches new Mennonite Mission Network.

by Gordon Houser

Besides food, what could be dearer to the hearts of Mennonites than music and mission? Participants at Nashville 2001 got a taste of both the evening of July 3 at the storied Grand Ole Opry House.

More than 4,000 filled the facility, including 1,000 from the community. Planners had placed ads in the local newspaper and on the radio, inviting people to the free concert. Volunteers handed out a copy of the brochure "Who Are the Mennonites?" to anyone not wearing a name tag identifying them as a participant in the Nashville 2001 convention.

"[The concert] put a different face on the Mennonites," said Russ Swedberg. He and Norma, his wife, from Hudson, Fla., attended the concert after seeing a newspaper ad.

Norma said they were pleasantly surprised to learn about the different types of Mennonites. "We thought all Mennonites were old-fashioned. We had no idea that Mennonites are also like this," she said.

Roy Williams, pastor of College Hill Mennonite Church, Tampa, Fla., and a member of Mennonite Church USA's Executive Board, and Sheri Williams, Roy's daughter, program coordinator for Service Adventure and a member of the African-American Mennonite Association board, hosted the evening.

Performers included New Life Sound Quartet, a southern gospel group from Sarasota, Fla.; Radiant, a threesome that takes elements from South American and Caribbean folk music and performs in English and Spanish; Full Table, a 10-member male a cappella ensemble based in Harrisonburg, Va.;

Music for mission: **Among those performing at the Opry House on July 3 are (clockwise from left) Reunion Vocal Band, Radiant, Liberian A Cappella Choir and Tony Brown. More than 4,000 people attended the event, including 1,000 from tourists and the community.**

Carol Ann Weaver, a composer and pianist who teaches music at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.; Liberian A Cappella Choir, seven young men, five of whom are blind, representing five of the 16 major tribes of Liberia; Reunion Vocal Band, a group of former college friends and professional musicians that has gathered annually since 1990; J.D. Martin (Jerry Derstine), a native of Harrisonburg, Va., who had established himself as one of Nashville's top songwriters before moving to Los Angeles in 1994; and Tony Brown, a nationally acclaimed baritone who teaches and is artist-in-residence at Hesston (Kan.) College.

Stanley Green, appointed this spring executive director of Mennonite Church USA's new mission agency, announced the name of that agency as Mennonite Mission Network. "The Holy Spirit is wanting to do a new thing in mission" through the Mennonite church, he said.

Later in the evening, an offering was taken for Mennonite mission work around the world. People gave more than $16,000 for the work of mission.

The crowd also viewed a montage from *Journey to Forgiveness*, a documentary produced by Mennonite Media for ABC television that will air in December.

A musical team from Harmony Mennonite Church, the only Mennonite congregation in Nashville, led concertgoers in a hymnsing that included "Praise God From Whom" and ended with the rousing "I'll Fly Away."

Bethany Swope contributed to this article.

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Random acts of kindness: Children sing to the adults during Friday's worship session.

Sharing Testamints in Nashville

by Duane S. Stoltzfus

In single file the children headed out into a grand courtyard of the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center, each carrying a heart-shaped basket that had been woven by hand minutes earlier.

As they surveyed a courtyard full of hundreds of Mennonite high school students clustered in small groups, some of the children seemed to lose their nerve and held their baskets close. But with a little urging from their adult escorts, the children fanned out in search of strangers, reaching into their baskets to pull out Testamints, breath mints wrapped in Bible verses, to share with whomever they chose.

"I was kind of embarrassed at first, but then I got excited," said Jessanna Buschur, a 10-year-old from Archbold, Ohio. "It was fun."

Mara Wemer, 10, of Bloomington, Ill., came back beaming: "When I gave a Testamint to a girl, she said thanks and took my picture."

The children had successfully carried out their mission: committing random acts of kindness, as the workshop was called, one mint at a time. As the workshop leader, Pat Minnick, a teacher from Goshen, Ind., had said, "You'll brighten their day."

About 270 children in grades one through six attended Nashville 2001, enjoying a series of workshops, daily worship and music, and special activities, such as a scavenger hunt and boat rides past the lush greens and choreographed fountains in the interior of the hotel.

While their parents carried out historic votes on a church merger and membership guidelines, the children, from such places as Miami; Moundridge, Kan.; Sioux Falls, S.D.; and Sellersville, Pa.; fully embraced a unifying theme, "Together: Hand in Hand With Jesus."

"We are planting seeds for the future of the Mennonite Church," said Carol Grieser, a retired schoolteacher from Goshen, Ind., who coordinated the program for the grade-school children. "We are not baby-sitters. We are caring for children who are learning to know each other and to live Christ-centered lives."

Grieser worked in partnership with Eleanor Snyder, Kitchener, Ont., director of children's education for the Commission on Education,

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who developed the morning worship themes (kindness, peace, patience, thankfulness and love) and curriculum for the children.

The children were divided into small groups for many of the workshop activities, including Make-It-and-Give-It-Away, in which children made something to share, and Make-It-and-Take-It, in which they made bracelets or other mementos to keep.

On one morning all the children joined forces to sing in the adult worship service.

One of several handouts for the children was a list of all those in their group, with names and addresses, encouraging them to write letters in the months ahead.

"We hope that friendships develop, that they will stay in touch, and that two years from now, they'll say, 'Remember when we were in Nashville together?' " Grieser said.

Duane S. Stoltzfus teaches communication at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Young adults: From left, Evelina Lindholm, Josefin Oberg, and Anders Lindmark, all of Jokkmokk, Sweden, spin a coin at the coffeehouse with Danette Hochstetler, Kalona, Iowa. While only 130 registered for young adult activities at Nashville 2001, many served as youth sponsors, delegates, worship leaders and performed music.

Junior high convention dresses down

At the junior high convention at Cumberland University, 25 miles east of Nashville, Corey Miller, pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., removed his clothing.

Not all of it, of course. Just enough to make his point. To illustrate Colossians 3:12-17, he took off layers of sports clothes and paraphernalia to show the need of putting off such items as anger or hate. He kept on his jogging suit to show his readiness to run the race.

The junior high convention used clothing symbolism throughout its meetings. At the beginning of the week, each participant received a white T-shirt. The shirts later were dyed to show transformation.

On Thursday, July 5, the 255 participants raised their hands toward Nashville and prayed for the delegates.—*Celia Lehman and Ann Graham Price*

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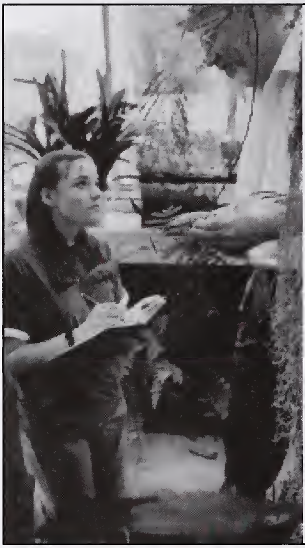

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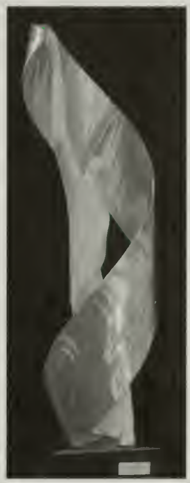
Art, blood, seminars and more

More went on at Nashville 2001 than there is room to tell.

Meetings, meetings, meetings: Among the many gatherings was one for women pastors (below, top) and for the African-American Mennonite Association (below, middle), where George Providence II of Reba Place Church, Evanston, Ill., speaks to other AAMA board members. Conventiongoers attended more than 100 seminars, plus Bible studies, plays, concerts, reunions and recreational activities.



More than music: Mennonite artists exhibited their work at Nashville. At left is "The Healing Garment," a sculpture created by Esther Augsburger of Harrisonburg, Va. Priscilla Wero (below), a Navajo potter from Bloomfield, N.M., paints a pot at the Native American booth at mTOWN.

Donation time: Conventiongoers (including Jill Mullet of Millersburg, Ohio, above) gave an estimated 500 pints of blood during the week. Ten Thousand Villages (left) donated its income from the week—about $18,000—toward the development of a local Ten Thousand Villages store.

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Colossians 3:12-17

Peace in our own town

Peacemakers meet before Nashville 2001 to worship, sing, tell stories.

by David Hiebert

Under the theme “Bring Forth the City of God: Doing Justice in Our Own Communities,” 100 peacemakers gathered June 30-July 2 in Monteagle, Tenn.

The multiethnic group experienced spirited worship, lively singing and heard a variety of peacemaking stories in workshops. Bible study, preaching and activities for children and youth rounded out the program.

“The real stuff of peacemaking happens on the congregational level,” said Esther Epp-Tiessen, Winnipeg, as part of a participants’ self-introduction at one of the workshops.

Several congregations had formed peace centers in their communities and encouraged others to do the same. Steve Derthick, Chattanooga, Tenn., and Dick Davis, Dallas, led a workshop in which they shared experiences and advice for congregations interested in a peace center.

David Hiebert

Mystery: Elaine Bryant, pastor of Englewood Mennonite Church, Chicago, preaches to the gathered peacemakers.

Steve spoke from his experience of seven years as director of the Raleigh, N.C., peace center and Dick as pastor of Peace Mennonite Church. The two centers have developed in different directions. The Raleigh center is firmly a part of the congregation’s ministry, while the Dallas center has broadened the base of its constituency to include people of many faiths. Both models seem to work, but the direction needs to be intentional, Steve said.

“Why should local congregations be involved in the local community?” asked Elaine Bryant, pastor of Englewood Mennonite Church, Chicago, while preaching at the Saturday worship service. “To prevent people from perishing,” she answered.

In another sermon on Sunday, she said that while it is a mystery, Jesus “said the word and it healed them. Prayer, not protest, is what reveals the mystery of Christ” to us today.

The real stuff of peacemaking happens on the congregational level.

—Esther Epp-Tiessen

Playing multiple roles, Leo Hartshorn, pastor of Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa., played drums and a guitar in the worship band and led Bible study on the meaning of the city in Scripture. His interactive approach to the study included overhead projector and small-group activities. In offering examples of the city as symbol of peace and justice, Leo offered the following examples:

- Nineveh as the repentant city;
- the city set on a hill or the church as an alternate “polis” (people);
- the new Jerusalem as the redeemed city;
- an exilic community where we need to “seek the peace of the city” (Jeremiah 29:4ff.)

The gathering was one in a series of pre-assembly peace meetings and was planned by Susan Mark Landis, Orrville, Ohio, Peace and Justice Committee of the Mennonite Church; Doug Krehbiel, Newton, Kan., Commission on Home Ministries; and Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, Akron, Pa., Mennonite Central Committee.

David Hiebert is a member of Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale, Pa.

pick-me-up

run to the **store**
run to the bank
pick up the kids
pick up the **pace**
pick up the house finish the meal rinse out the tub turn down the lights
a-hug-and-a-kiss-and-a-squeeze good night
(rest)

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Toward Solidarity
Against Racism

Iris de León-Hartshorn
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Publishing's red ink

Delegates call for denominational support for Mennonite Publishing House Inc., but agency leaders say solutions need to be more than passing the offering plate.

by Rich Preheim

Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) Inc. is in financial trouble, and Nashville 2001 delegates repeatedly called on the new denomination to help its publishing operation.

"We really need to find new ways to raise funds for that agency of the church," Paul Zehr, a Mennonite Church delegate from Lancaster Conference, said on the assembly floor. "If we can't find any other ways, maybe we need to have an offering for the poor."

The chair of the MPH Inc. board doesn't think it's that simple. "Passing the offering plate on a Sunday just isn't going to do it," said J. Glen Hostetler.

MPH Inc. was formed earlier this year by merging Mennonite Publishing House of the Mennonite Church (MC) and Faith & Life Press of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), both of which had been suffering lagging product sales, resulting in a combined unsecured debt load of $3.2 million, recently resulting in significant cutbacks.

MPH Inc. is supposed to be self-sustaining, a stipulation that some Nashville delegates decried, suggesting that perhaps the agency should be subsidized by the denomination, like other programs. "Profitability is a bad concern for ministry," said Joel Mathis, GC delegate from Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan.

But MPH Inc. executive vice president Dennis Good said the new denomination can help alleviate the situation quite simply. "We need a higher percentage of the Mennonite Church using our products," he told a question-and-answer session at the convention July 6.

At the session, Rosella Wiens Regier, a retired Faith & Life Press editor, underscored the importance of denominational publishing. "If printing isn't missional, I don't know what is," she said, "because that's how the word gets out."

The condition of the former Mennonite Publishing House in particular has sent reverberations throughout the church. Because of its financial straits, the board last year decided to eliminate paying supplemental Medicare benefits for retirees.

That move, which will save the organization about $75,000 a year, has set off a firestorm of protest, and a group of retirees has initiated a grievance process according to Mennonite Church guidelines.

Hostetler doesn't mind the grievance but said, "A process and a determination at the end doesn't put any more money in the bank."

At the convention, a proposed resolution was drafted inviting contributions to restore those benefits so "our promises can indeed be kept." The resolution was never submitted for delegate action.

A $531,000 shortfall in Mennonite Publishing House's last fiscal year prompted the MPH Inc. board in June to cut vacation Bible school curriculum and the *Mennonite Directory* and close the Provident Bookstore in Scottdale, Pa. MPH Inc. is now involved in explorations to save the curriculum and directory.

To address its money woes, the publishing house is looking at selling some assets and exploring other sources of income, including grants, annuities and "cost-sharing" with other denominational agencies.

Good downplayed the significance of MPH Inc. authorizing a full financial audit, something the previous Mennonite Publishing House had not done for about a decade. Instead, the operation had undergone regular financial reviews, which are less comprehensive than audits, Good said, but "the result is essentially the same."

"An audit expresses an opinion about the financial status of a company," he said. "A review does not."

> If printing isn't missional, I don't know what is, because that's how the word gets out.
>
> *—Rosella Wiens Regier*

Nashville's general issue with Mennonites

Long before more than 9,000 of them descended on Nashville, Tenn., for their biennial convention earlier this month, U.S. Mennonites had made an impact on the city.

Nashville is named for Francis Nash, an American general in the Revolutionary War who died as a result of injuries suffered in the Battle of Germantown, Pa., in 1777. As the Americans retreated, Nash was buried in the nearest cemetery—that of Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa. George Washington attended the burial service.

In 1936, the city of Nashville tried to acquire Nash's body from the church cemetery, but Towamencin trustees refused, in part because they didn't know which remains were his, says Mennonite historian John Ruth.

Mennonite Heritage Center, Harleysville, Pa.

This marker in the Towamencin Mennonite Church cemetery, Kulpsville, Pa., was erected by local citizens in 1844 to honor the American Revolutionary War general for whom Nashville, Tenn., is named.

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- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible.

  For further information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; email <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Turpin Mennonite Church**, Turpin, Okla., is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Applicant would have the opportunity to minister to a congregation of varied ages and denominational backgrounds.

  Contact Shirley Eggers at 580-259-6457 or Alan Hodges at 580-778-3315.

- **Huber Mennonite Church**, New Carlisle, Ohio, seeks services of a ***pastor*** committed to serving faithfully according to God's Word. Small congregation of 75 in recently expanded facility with anticipation of growth through outreach.

  Contact Judy Hartman, 937-667-0287.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for two part-time positions teaching ***K-8 Spanish*** and ***junior high language arts*** (these could be combined to create a full-time position). Lake Center is a K-8 school of 380 students in the Akron/Canton area.

  For an application and further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44685; 330-877-2049; <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>.

- **Drift Creek Conference and Retreat Center**, on the beautiful Oregon Coast, Lincoln City, seeks an ***administrative director or co-administrators***. Drift Creek Camp is located in the Oregon Coast Range Mountains, 13 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Full-time, year-round position, beginning Jan. 1, 2002. Responsible for administration, program planning, development, staff and volunteer coordination. Prior related experience desired.

  For additional information and application materials, contact Gwen Peachy, 2713 NW Arnold Way, Corvallis, OR 97330; 541-754-6336; <gpeachey@yahoo.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Kelowna, B.C., is searching for a ***pastor***. We are a relatively small congregation with less than 100 members and adherents. Our facility has ample space to accommodate new growth. While many of our members are retired from full-time employment, we are interested in reaching out to the community and meeting the needs of younger families. Our Sunday morning services use a traditional style of worship that is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist faith. We actively support the programs of MCC and the Mennonite church conferences.

  Potential pastoral candidates who are interested in learning more about us may contact Jake Thiessen, 10418 Tyndal Road, Lake Country, BC V4V 2K7; 250-766-1938; <jthiessen@umagroup.com>.

- **Is God urging you** to use your leadership abilities, management skills and three years of cross-cultural experience to ***serve others through MCC***? MCC needs people to provide leadership, starting this year or early 2002, in El Salvador, Ethiopia, Zambia, Congo, Colombia, south Florida, Vietnam, Laos, Philippines, Egypt and Sudan. MCC will need leaders, starting in spring/summer 2002, for these locations: Guatemala, Kenya, Russia/Ukraine, Mexico, Mozambique, Tanzania, Bolivia, southeast Europe and South Africa/Lesotho/Swaziland. Plan ahead. Apply now!

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151, <cdb@mcc.org>; or your nearest MCC office for job descriptions and more information about these upcoming MCC leadership openings.

- **Garden Spot Village**, a Mennonite-affiliated retirement community, seeks a visionary ***CEO*** with strong financial acumen and operational experience to lead its new and rapidly growing campus in southeast Pennsylvania. Located at New Holland in historic Lancaster County, GSV provides independent living and assisted living services to over 500 residents. Construction is under way to add health-care beds, dementia programming and a community center. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive retirement community experience.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <KirkStiffney@aol.com>.

Regional vice president

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking a regional vice president for Kansas and parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma to provide strong leadership to its insurance and financial services sales force. This position will recruit, mentor, and hire agents, oversee direct marketing, and be responsible to establish and achieve regional sales goals.

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Everett J. Thomas

A time for silence

On July 5 in the afternoon, Mennonite Church USA was born in Nashville, Tenn. By unexpectedly wide margins, delegates voted to adopt membership guidelines for a new denomination formed from the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC). By even greater margins, they approved a plan of merger that creates one new delegate body and defines the structures of Mennonite Church USA. (See story on page 4).

"Neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither GC nor MC, but J.C.'s [people]," speaker Janet Plenert exclaimed as she paraphrased Galatians 3:28 in the final adult worship service before delegates headed home on July 7.

So now we have a new church. The new denomination begins with a momentum and vitality that few could have predicted just two years ago.

"This is neither a time of winning or losing," said GC historian Robert Kreider, who addressed the delegates along with MC historian John A. Lapp moments after the historic votes were announced. "It is time to praise God. It is a time to talk with others with whom we have differed."

This is also a time for silence.

On July 5, when the results of the historic vote were announced, a poignant silence filled the delegate hall. No applause. No cheering. No celebration. For a few brief moments the delegate body sat in a holy hush. This church that labored so faithfully to find unity was now moved to silence by the miracle of God's procreation.

A similar silence greeted the 1995 vote in Wichita, Kan., when both groups decided to explore the merger of the two bodies. However, the last six years have been anything but quiet. In fact, the noise of those conversations about merger revealed the labor pains in this birthing process.

Birthing is the compelling metaphor for the day when God's Spirit created a new church. Now it is time for this newborn to rest. Indeed, such was the image offered by Seferina DeLeon, from Goshen, Ind., as she helped lead an adult worship session. Describing the new church as an infant, she sensed God yearning to wrap us in a soft blanket and hold us close for safety.

Mennonite Church USA is no longer an uncertain dream. It now exists, and old structures have been transformed into a new body. But there remain difficult days ahead for some parts of this new church. Even with overwhelming margins in the vote to create a new denomination, some among the minority will part company with the church. In addition, the next months will be a critical time for several area conferences that have not yet discerned whether to join Mennonite Church USA as full members or ask for provisional membership.

But one uncertainty has vanished. There is now a new church. Two strong and vibrant traditions are beginning a new one. As one denomination we take a collective sigh of relief and pause in grateful silence. God's Spirit has brought us new life in Christ.—*ejt*

One uncertainty has vanished. There is now a new church. Two strong and vibrant traditions are beginning a new one.

The challenges ahead

Within 24 hours after the vote in Nashville that created Mennonite Church USA on July 5, leaders began describing the challenges immediately ahead for the new church.

First, there is the matter of molding new denominational programs into a missional structure that helps each congregation participate fully in God's purposes.

The second task is to address a chronic scarcity of pastors for congregations, and the attitude among many Mennonite parents that causes them to discourage their children from considering ministry as a vocation.

The third task is to establish strong relations with other national churches in the Mennonite World Conference (MWC).

"Why should Mennonite Church USA connect to others?" asked Pakisa Tshimika, director of MWC's Global Gifts Sharing Project. "Because we are family. It is not a question of choice but of obedience."

So the new Mennonite Church USA begins with some steep challenges. Clearly Nashville 2001 was not the end of the transformation process. Rather it was the beginning of a new journey that God has charted for us.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Care for the earth

I was pleased and blessed by the June 19 articles on the environment. I agee with Eric Kurtz ("Mennonites and the Environment") that we need to make stewardship of creation a central article of our faith. Tobin Miller Shearer ("Quieted by the Land") suggests that we Mennonites may be spiritually impoverished compared with the peoples on whose land we live after it was in many cases forcibly taken away. And thanks to Gordon Houser (editorial, "The Blessing of High Gas Prices") for bravely pointing out for us how we may be buying into the general consumer and profit-taking culture by our lifestyle. Now I ask myself, Am I willing to make the changes that I should?

Let's not feel that we have accomplished what we need to by having good articles in *The Mennonite* with which we can agree or disagree. Let's make it a priority agenda of the church.—*Larry Eby, Albany, Ore.*

Your issue on the environment strikes home. If the shoe fits, wear it—and it fits most of us. Our desire for an easier life and higher standard of living fuels consumerism. Consumerism devours our natural resources, and the waste we leave behind is unacceptable. Our lifestyle tends to run roughshod over our blessings and resources.

As we go about our daily lives, we must be more mindful of our responsibility to the rest of the world. Each of us helps mold our society. We must use less and recycle as much as possible. Let our actions be more acceptable to our Creator.—*Caleb Gerber, Dalton, Ohio*

Kudos for Gordon Houser's editorial. Admonitions addressed to the U.S. administration should also be sent north of the 49th parallel. We are all in this world together, and until we really grieve the future of our planet with a much poorer environment, we will not take the necessary steps to protect it for ourselves and those who come after us. I hope the practical factual list of what contributes carbon dioxide will help us confront our selfishness. Certainly vehicles spewing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere are a huge cause of deterioration, but the willy-nilly destruction of any growing plants and trees for more urban sprawl is another evil vanity. Let's all resolve to walk and bicycle more and plant more trees and other plants. Trees are the dust mops of the earth; we cannot survive without them.—*Lorne Buhr, Edmonton*

CLC contributions

For the sake of historical accuracy, let's set the record straight. The June 26 editorial ("Leadership From a Congregational Point of View") said: "The [Constituency Leaders Council's] greatest contribution to the transformation process has been in the formation of membership guidelines. ... For several years before the CLC tackled this issue, some earlier groups failed to resolve the question of who would be a member in Mennonite Church USA and who would decide." It is hardly accurate to impugn failure to the original membership committee. Every single significant item defining who would be a member and who would decide came from the work of that original committee. We have now accepted its recommendations.

A second membership committee, serving under the CLC, made some changes to implement new legal understandings and to make the full document more acceptable in tone to a portion of our constituency. That it passed so overwhelmingly is due in no small measure to the strong endorsement of the denominational staff, CLC and Executive Board. We should all be grateful.—*John A. Esau, North Newton, Kan.*

Refund realities

The July 3 editorial, "What to Do With $300," left me with the impression that everyone will be getting a $300 or $600 refund soon. The fine print from the Internal Revenue Service blows that anticipation out the window for many people. The following comes directly from <www.irs.gov>, where it becomes clear that the figures above are maximums.

"This year's advance payment will be 5 percent of the taxable income shown on the 2000 tax return, subject to limits. This income amount is on: Form 1040—line 39, Form 1040EZ—line 6, Form 1040A—line 25, TeleFile Tax Record—line K. However, the payment cannot be more than the person's tax liability minus any nonrefundable credits. This amount is on: Form 1040—line 51, Form 1040EZ—line 10, Form 1040A—line 33, TeleFile Tax Record—line K."

Many people in their dreams are spending $300 that they will not receive.—*Robert O. Zehr, Des Allemands, La.*

War's price tag

Peace Sunday, July 1, and reports such as on Iraqi sanctions lead one to ponder a lot of issues. Following World War I, Nicholas Murray Butler spoke of what the money spent for this one war could have done if used in positive

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

ways. It could have built and furnished a new home on five acres of land for every family in the United States, Canada, Australia, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, Germany and Russia. In addition, it could have put a $5 million library and a $10 million university in every city of 20,000 inhabitants in each of those countries. With interest of 5 percent on what would be left, salaries could be paid for 125,000 nurses and 125,000 teachers each year.

World War II was even more costly and devastating, killing more than 50 million people in Europe alone. Many additional millions were left destitute and as refugees. One day's bombing in the Gulf War cost the United States more than all U.S. churches spent for the evangelization of that part of the world through the centuries. Can a country or church claim to be Christian and take any part in causing such slaughter, starvation and suffering for those for whom Christ died?—*John M. Drescher, Quakertown, Pa.*

A world that is not Mennonite

The title of Loren Johns' article "How to Be Mennonite in a World That Is Not" in the June 12 issue caught our attention because that is how we find ourselves these days. A number of people of Mennonite, Church of the Brethren and Brethren in Christ backgrounds live in and around Connecticut, many of whom participate in other denominations. But we miss some things that are important to us. Although we live too far apart for a weekly Sunday worship, we get together almost monthly for a potluck, fellowship and singing. Last year we had a weekend retreat and have plans for another in October. If you are moving to Connecticut, or know someone who is, and would like to learn more about this group, call 203-782-6220 or email <jlbare1@compuserve.com>.—*Jim and Lois Bare, New Haven, Conn.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Coloring outside the lines in health care

A call for a community-based response to the uninsured poor in our communities

by Merlin Friesen

How do Anabaptists ... deal with the fact that the health-care product they deliver is tailor-made for the entitled in our society, while it excludes one in six people from its benefits?

The United States is in a quandary over health care. More than 44 million Americans are uninsured and thus excluded from affordable care. Not only do our uninsured neighbors have to pay for their own care, they must pay for it at premium rates that result from decades of profiteering by the U.S. medical and insurance industries. At the pharmacy, they pay three, four or 10 times as much in out-of-pocket costs for prescriptions as do their entitled neighbors with insurance.

Consequently, innumerable working poor Americans by age 55 have yet to receive even a simple routine checkup and must try to get along without basic advice or treatment from a health-care provider. The result of this is an injustice that goes far beyond inconvenience. Multiple reports have shown that people without insurance have extraordinarily higher rates of untreated illness and premature death.

Moral dilemma: These facts pose a moral dilemma to those of those who enjoy the benefits of insurance, especially to us who take part in and benefit from the health-care industry. How do Anabaptists in the health professions deal with the fact that the health-care product they deliver is tailor-made for the entitled in our society, while it (in effect) excludes one in six people from its benefits?

How do we as a society respond, knowing that our complex systems of health-care access create psychological and social barriers to the uninsured poor, barriers that perhaps go far beyond the finances involved? How do we reconcile that health care creates debt burdens that saddle our poor neighbors, while many in the health-care industry accumulate wealth in the process?

Has our "health-care" system too often perpetrated injustice rather than enhanced health for the low-income uninsured? And how do we as a church respond to these inequities and address their impact on the uninsured in our communities and the spiritual issues they present for those who work in the health field?

We U.S. Mennonites need to do more coloring outside the lines in facing and responding to the injustices of health-care access in our communities. Rather than waiting for government to solve this dilemma for the low-income uninsured around us and among us, we should be living out the good news of Jesus in creative ways. We must not be content with token gestures on a case-by-case basis, when we know that the poor all too often feel forced to avoid the health-care system entirely.

Hands-on solutions: Neither should we settle for resolutions and calls for government action when those of us in health care hold the basic tools in our hands. Mennonites have never hesitated to use our relatively small resources to address daunting problems like world hunger. We have emphasized hands-on, high-contact solutions. We should be no less willing to use our resources to address the even more immediate health-care needs of the uninsured around us.

What if each local body of believers, in every community we represent, created a health-care access point in our community where each of our working-poor, uninsured neighbors felt welcome, one where an insurance card was not perceived as the ticket for admission? What if such alternative-access models empowered people by expecting an affordable payment, while refusing to entrap the poor with accumulated debt?

What if these access models were easily reproduced in still other communities, characterized by simplicity while finding ways to deliver more with less in a low-cost environment? What if each of us who work in high-income health-care positions accepted a lower income level in exchange for donating 20, 50 or even 80 percent of our working time to such an effort, thereby challenging the greed in our professions? What if many church members shared their gifts in starting and operating these resources and encouraging local communities by recruiting the resources of others?

Pooled insights: These questions led to the development in 1998 of Jubilee Community Health Inc. in our low-income, rural community in southern Indiana. From early on, a group within the local Mennonite fellowship pooled its insights and offered its encouragement. Others in the group contributed to the remodeling of a 40-year-old house to use for a clinic. A number of people outside the Mennonite group donated time with renovation, legal incorporation and forming a governing board. Others contributed unsolicited financial gifts. Due to this broad community involvement, the entire project was possible with a facility and equipment investment of just over $50,000.

In four months, the clinic was open for operation. Based on a low-cost, cash-pay model,

Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only

fees are self-designated by patients, based on income guidelines and ability to pay. Eligibility is limited to those who are uninsured. This excludes the poorest families (those on Medicaid, who in our community have excellent health-care access at other facilities) and the elderly (who are covered by Medicare).

While this exclusion feels uncomfortable, it is key to focusing our resources on the primary need in our community, that of the working poor who are otherwise excluded from the high-cost medical system. It also leads directly to one of the more powerful messages we can communicate, that this facility is one where the uninsured are not outsiders. Their disconnected phone lines, low cash resources, missed appointments and frequent name or address changes become normal; we learn to adjust almost automatically.

Culturally appropriate: Simplicity of administration proved to be a key feature of this model. The lack of billing, grants or other complicated overhead results in a low-cost system that is easily managed. More importantly, the simple payment concept is intuitive and culturally appropriate for low-income people. It also is empowering; some patients are surprised (and pleased) to learn that we are not grant-funded, that their fees do cover the large majority of our operating expenses.

As we have become more knowledgeable in reaching this underserved group, we have also learned ways to multiply our efforts. We are able to gain access to low-cost lab testing, free medicines and women's health screening programs with only minimal administrative effort. Also we broaden our reach by recruiting help from specialists and other service providers.

Day after day, we receive thanks. Most striking are the transformed faces: Uncertainty or tension as people come in changes to relaxation as they leave. Many of these people have by now made multiple visits, while by their own admission they had avoided doctors for many years. Of the many women who have used our screening services, many had not had a routine exam in the previous 10 years. By being open nearly full-time, we can provide a true medical home for these patients, rather than just an urgent Band-Aid station.

One of the unique joys of Jubilee is the disengagement of financial pressures from the choice to spend time with individuals. We are free, when necessary, to be lavish with our time, taking our eyes off the clock to build bridges of trust and friendship. This is a healing and growing opportunity for caregivers as well as patients.

Experts: Though we can't solve every part of the access problem for our patients, it is gratifying to see how much can be done when we make ourselves experts in this area of need. In other communities, where profiles of needs, medical staff availability and other factors are different, the exact shape of the system will vary. The key concept is to identify the unique needs of the uninsured and to develop a model that connects the resources already available with those who need them.

Jesus' "upside-down kingdom" should lead us in directions that challenge the prevailing ways of operating.

Jesus' "upside-down kingdom" should lead us in directions that challenge the prevailing ways of operating, the principalities and powers to whom our nation's medical industry often gives homage. This great dilemma of the uninsured in the United States is solvable to a great extent on a local level. This need not involve large structures, major capital or lengthy lead times. It simply requires rethinking the rules and stepping a bit outside the margins of the status quo.

This effort requires the vision of health professionals in the church, but it is most effective if it includes contributions from others in the community. If we are to avoid squandering the gifts God has entrusted to us, and if we are to ensure that the uninsured poor in our communities are no longer outsiders to health care, then we will need to step forward locally, creatively, radically and joyfully.

Merlin Friesen, a physician, is a member of Paoli (Ind.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Features of a community-based solution for the uninsured poor

- Seek broad community involvement and support, involving as many people as possible.
- Cultivate a vision among a community-based board, including some members who utilize the services provided.
- Put a major (or exclusive) emphasis on services to the uninsured. Make the system truly theirs. Too often they have become the stepchildren of the health-care system.
- Provide continuity of care as much as possible, with broad hours of service and significant time commitments from key staff members.
- Incorporate community financial and volunteer resources rather than being primarily grant-funded.
- Keep the concept simple. Avoid complex administrative structures.
- Don't wait for a global solution to every aspect of health care. Use the tools, skills and resources you already have available locally.
- Focus on the main goal, connecting basic health-care resources with the people in your community who have not been able to access them.—*Merlin Friesen*

What does and does not cause mental illness

Mental illnesses are too complex to attempt to find just one cause.

by Crystal Horning

Because we live in a fallen world, mental illness exists and God calls us to respond in a loving, nonjudgmental way.

In his book *Why Do Christians Shoot Their Wounded?* Dwight Carlson writes, "An attitude permeating much of Christianity assumes emotional problems are almost always due to deliberate sin or bad choices."

Many Christians believe those suffering from mental illness created their illnesses themselves by sinful thoughts, behaviors or feelings—or by a lack of a daily devotional life. Thoughts like these allow us to assign blame and identify a cause. That explanation lets us deal with what can seem an unreal situation.

One minister was overheard responding to a woman who wanted prayer for her depression: "No, I won't pray for you because depressed people feel sorry for themselves, and God doesn't accept that." How easy is it to think the person struggling with mental illness should just do more to get better.

The problem with such snap judgments is that they are too easy. Mental illnesses are too complex to attempt to find just one cause. There are too many possible causes such as heredity, chemical imbalances and environment. While looking at these causes, it is also important to look at two ideas commonly held to be causes of mental illness but aren't: sin and demon possession.

Anyone who has seen the devastating effects of a serious mental illness must wonder how such a thing occurs. But it is impossible to make a clear judgment that one of the following is the single cause of a person's mental illness. More often mental illness is recognized as caused by a combination of these elements.

Chemical imbalance: The brain is an extraordinary organ. Your every thought, emotion, movement and bodily function—all you do, think, say or feel—originates in your brain. The rest of your body is only there to carry the brain around and keep it going.

New discoveries are made almost daily about the workings of the human brain—God's greatest miracle of creation. The working of the brain depends on the ability of the nerve cells to communicate with each other.

Neurotransmitters control the function of the nerve endings and carry messages between different parts of the brain. Human emotions are determined by whether or not these neurotransmitters are successful in communicating messages to the brain cells. As long as the neurotransmitters are in balance, a person is tranquil and happy. When they get out of balance, the person can experience mental illness. This imbalance causes the brain to process information incorrectly and can make it hard for those with mental illness to distinguish reality from fantasy.

Genetics and heredity: Mental illness runs in families just as diabetes or high blood pressure does. If a parent has schizophrenia, there is nearly a 40 percent chance his or her child will have it, too. Relatives of people who have depression are two to three times more likely than the general population to also suffer from depression. As yet, no single gene or even combination of genes for any of the major mental illnesses has been found. Mental illness appears to result from interactions of multiple genes that create a risk. This risk is converted into a disease by the interaction of the genes with environmental factors.

Heredity refers to how much a person's genetic makeup contributes to the variation of a disease or trait. Once a disorder is established in a family, the next step is to determine the disorder's heredity. Even with a high level of hereditability, it is essential to point out that environmental factors can play a significant role in the severity and cause of a disorder.

Environment: Environmental experiences or changes may also trigger mental illness in susceptible people. Traumatic events such as loss of a loved one, a job change, relocation or abuse affect people in many ways. For those who have a genetic predisposition toward mental illness, these environmental experiences have the potential for a greater impact than the same experiences would have for those who do not share that genetic predisposition.

Psychological factors, such as differences in the way individuals handle emotions or deal with stress, should also be examined to find whether they might have a role in determining vulnerability to mental illness.

What about sin? Many Christians want to know if mental illness is caused by sin. The thinking of the questioner seems to be, If mental illness is caused by sin, then the person experiencing mental illness can repent of the sin and the mental illness will disappear. Again, this is looking for easy answers to a complex problem.

In general, the existence of mental illness, even all illness, can be traced to the fall of humankind—Sin with a capital S. Mental illness certainly involves elements of sin in our fallen world—the sin of others and personal sin. Saying that mental illness in the world is caused by sin is at least partially true. But saying that depression is caused by a specific sin

the suffering person committed is incorrect and potentially damaging.

When a person has a mental illness, the church often considers one of two alternatives: either God actively inflicted that person as judgment for sin or God chose not to remove the affliction or heal the illness because of some lack of faith or moral failure. But there is another option: Because we live in a fallen world, mental illness exists and God calls us to respond in a loving, nonjudgmental way. God, through Jesus Christ, is in the business of drawing us to himself.

Remember the question the disciples posed to Jesus at the pool of Siloam? When Jesus healed the man with blindness, the disciples asked, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). Jesus replied, "Neither this man nor his parents, but this happened so the work of God may be displayed in his life" (v. 3). Jesus informed the disciples that the man, the disciples, and the community all needed to understand that God was at work displaying himself in many ways to those who desired to be within God's kingdom.

Mental illness and demon possession: Mental illness and demon possession are distinct phenomena, though they often have similar symptoms. Because of the similarities, many people mistakenly believe mental illness is caused by demon possession. Demon possession is a spiritual condition, while mental illness is primarily a psychological or biological condition.

In his article "Understanding Functional Mental Illness," Theodore Mauger states that Christians who have a mental illness face unique struggles because the symptoms of demonic influence and the symptoms of mental illness are similar. Roger Bufford, in his book *Counseling and the Demonic*, also suggests demonic influence can look like some mental disorders.

Distinctions between demonic symptoms and the symptoms of mental illness are not clearly drawn in Scripture. The Jewish rulers even accused Jesus of having a demon (Matthew 12:22-29; Mark 3:20-27; John 7:20; 8:48-52; 10:19-21). More significantly, Jesus' own family wondered if he was mentally ill (Mark 3:21). Even in the time of Christ there appears to have been confusion about what constituted demon possession. Jesus was not demon possessed or mentally ill. But people tried to find a reason for his behavior, just as we today try to find reasons for the existence of mental illness.

Summary of causes: Trying to find a cause for mental illness is like having a patient enter treatment saying, "I want to get to the root of my problem." This assumes just one root has caused the problem and that unearthing it will provide a cure. In mental illness, there is no such thing as "the root cause." At best there are many roots, and each root has many offshoots.

A simple explanation of the cause of mental illness does not exist, for we are fearfully and wonderfully—and differently—made (Psalm 139:14). Believing that a person with a mental illness is totally responsible for his or her problem is like saying someone with diabetes chose to be ill. Personal responsibility can play a role in mental illness, as it can in diabetes, but it is not by a long shot the whole story.

Where does faith enter the picture? What comfort, if any, can we derive from our faith in God? If someone we love has a mental illness, can that person have a living, growing, sustaining faith relationship with Christ? What if you are the one with the mental illness? Can you have faith in God and have a mental illness? History, as evidenced by the lives of some of the giants in the Bible, says yes.

Believing that a person with a mental illness is totally responsible for his or her problem is like saying someone with diabetes chose to be ill.

The article is excerpted from A Christian View of Mental Illness: Understanding and Response *by Crystal Horning (Mennonite Mutual Aid, 2001, $5.95). Crystal is mental illness consultant for Mennonite Mutual Aid.*

Executive Board, mission staff appointments flesh out new Mennonite Church USA structures

In the wake of the delegate decision earlier this month to create Mennonite Church USA, more pieces are falling into place with the announcements of new denominational appointments.

Kenyetta Aduma of Hampton, Va., director of the African-American Mennonite Association (AAMA), has been named director of the Office of Cross-Cultural Relations, one of six offices under the auspices of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. Aduma will continue to work out of Hampton for the next two years, by which time new denominational offices are expected to be established.

Aduma has served as AAMA director since Feb. 1, 2000. Previously she was monitoring and compliance supervisor for the City of Youngstown, Ohio, and a staff attorney for Northwest Ohio Legal Services in Youngstown. She is a member of the Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) board and of the board of reference for Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

Aduma's appointment, approved by the Executive Board on July 2, leaves only the position of director of the Office of Convention Planning to be filled. Already hired are Marlene Kropf, Congregational Life; Cynthia Snider, Communications; Ted Stuckey, Administration and Finance; and Keith Harder and Dale Stoltzfus, Ministerial Leadership. All positions start Feb. 1, 2002.

Meanwhile, Mennonite Mission Network (MMN), Mennonite Church USA's mission agency, has named its associate executive directors, who will lead the agency's four departments. Executive director Stanley Green made the announcement at the network's first board meeting on July 7.

Peter Graber will lead MMN's Missional Church Resourcing, which will provide consultation, training and networking services for area conferences and congregations. He is now director of Partnership and Development Services for MBM in Elkhart, Ind.

James Krabill, MBM vice president for Mission Advocacy and Communication in Elkhart, will direct Collaborative Ministries, overseeing mission programs and planning. He served with MBM in West Africa for more than two decades.

Interim MBM president Martha (Marty) Lehman will be associate executive director for Mission Advancement, which includes communication and development. She joined MBM in 1998 as vice president of the organization's operations in Elkhart.

Erwin Rempel of Newton, Kan., will serve as associate executive director for Mission Services, responsible for human resources, financial accountability, information technology and office services. He was executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission from 1982 to 1994 and is currently director of the project joining MBM, COM and the Commission on Home Ministries to form the new agency. He has served in Brazil with COM and in Botswana with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee.

Graber, Krabill, Lehman and Rempel join Green as the first MMN staff appointees.

Mennonite Education Agency remains the only one of the four Mennonite Church USA program agencies without a chief executive. J. Robert Ramer will retire July 31 as publisher and chief executive officer of Mennonite Publishing House and will be succeeded by executive vice president Dennis Good, formerly publisher of Faith & Life Press. Howard Brenneman remains president of Mennonite Mutual Aid.—*Rich Preheim with MBM News Service*

CPT Vieques protester released

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—A Christian Peacemaker Teams volunteer was released from a San Juan prison July 13, the first of four CPT workers to be freed after being found guilty of trespassing on Vieques to protest the U.S. Navy's military exercises on the island.

H.A. Penner of Akron, Pa., had been serving a 20-day sentence in Guaynabo Detention Center. Richard Williams of West New York, N.J., is scheduled to be released from the facility July 25 after serving 30 days. Two other CPT workers, Mark Byler of Goshen, Ind., and Brian Ladd of Boulder, Colo., are serving sentences in their home communities: 20 nights in a halfway house, 100 hours of community service and one year probation.

The four were arrested May 2 after entering a restricted area of Vieques. Penner, Williams, Byler and Ladd, plus seven Puerto Ricans, were found guilty of trespassing in a June 28 trial in federal district court. Williams is one of about 60 other Vieques protesters in Guaynabo, including Robert F. Kennedy Jr.—*CPT News Service*

AMBS • window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Reflections

Encourage and celebrate

J. Nelson Kraybill, AMBS President

A recent *New York Times* article describes growing concern about a shortage of ministers among Protestant churches in North America. Until recently, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Methodists had more trained clergy than congregations seeking pastors. Now many congregations (especially in rural areas) are without trained leaders.

Mennonites generally follow this trend, and I constantly seek models of people and congregations who give clues for how the church can respond creatively to this leadership need.

I had lunch in June with Duane Beck, an AMBS alumnus whose congregation, Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart, just celebrated his thirty years of service as pastor at Mennonite churches in Ohio and Indiana.

What was the greatest joy of his years of ministry? Duane mentioned two: the baptism of a new believer with whom he had played fast pitch softball, and a program that Duane initiated in Elkhart to "buy back" guns to decrease the level of violence in the city. *What a perfect blend of Anabaptist conviction—a pastor who finds equal joy in calling people to faith in Jesus Christ and working to reduce violence.*

What must happen for a new generation of such effective pastors to emerge? The recent Samuel Project survey of Mennonite youth, pastors and leaders indicates that not many Mennonite young people consider congregational pastoral leadership as a vocational option, for several reasons: 1) they do not recognize or they ignore the call, 2) others do not encourage them to consider ministry, 3) they believe they can respond to the call in other ways, and 4) they are concerned about financial issues and loss of personal time in a ministry career.

Duane's story of hope-filled and imaginative ministry inspires me, and from it I take the following clues:

- When he was growing up, both Duane's home and his congregation were positive about ministry. "My parents were always affirming about church and about pastoring."
- In high school and college, a few key teachers and mentors specifically encouraged Duane to listen for the call of God on his life. Duane mentioned pastor Peter Wiebe in Kansas and professor Atlee Beechy at Goshen College.
- He received in-depth intellectual and spiritual formation at a Mennonite seminary—and has regularly updated this with continuing education courses.
- From the time he first heard the call to ministry, Duane has had regular interaction with a mentor or a spiritual director. These relationships have helped foster spiritual disciplines of prayer and retreat. "I would have crashed and burned a long time ago without that."

Calling, encouraging, mentoring, training, celebrating—these are urgent tasks for Mennonites in addressing leadership needs. Some training of leaders must happen with congregation- or conference-based education. A significant number of future church leaders also deserve the comprehensive Anabaptist training and spiritual formation that a Mennonite seminary can provide.

Neither seminary nor pastoral leadership is for everybody. But everyone in the church can encourage pastors-in-formation, and can celebrate the years of service these people give for our spiritual well-being and the mission of the church.

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

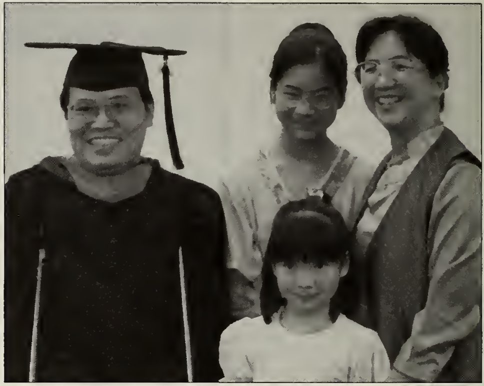
AMBS Panorama

January at AMBS

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Thirty-three students graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 25. Twelve received the Master of Divinity degree. Five were awarded the Master of Arts in Peace Studies, eleven the Master of Arts in Theological Studies, and four the Master of Arts in Christian Formation. One student received the Certificate in Theological Studies.

Key:
MDiv: Master of Divinity
MATS: Master of Arts in Theological Studies
MAPS: Master of Arts in Peace Studies
MACF: Master of Arts in Christian Formation



Kim Chen and Cherry Wu, his wife, and their two daughters, Anna and Hannah, will move to Wilmore, Ky., this summer where Kim will continue his studies before they return to Taiwan.

Left to right: Kerry Atkinson, Eric Boschmann, Laura Brenneman, Pamela Bressler
Not pictured: Laura Barnett

Kerry Atkinson. MAPS. Will pursue work in restorative justice. Kerry is married to Robert Atkinson, and is the daughter of John and Mary Flynn of West Chester, Ohio. She is a member of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, Elkhart.

Laura Barnett. (Not pictured) Certificate in Theological Studies. Laura will continue teaching; longer terms plans are in process. She is married to Carl (Skip) Barnett and they have two children. She is a member of St. John's of the Cross, Bristol, Ind. Her parents are Joe and Kay Renner of Springfield, Va.

Eric Boschmann. MATS in theology and ethics. Will take a year off from studies to prepare for further graduate work. Eric is married to Jennifer Miller. He is a member of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, Ind., and his parents are Erwin and Priscilla Boschmann of Indianapolis.

Laura Brenneman. MATS in biblical studies. Exploring a mission/service assignment. Laura is a member of Pinto Mennonite Church, Pinto, Md., and her parents are Lawrence J. and Judith L. Brenneman.

Pamela Bressler. MDiv. Is exploring pastoral counseling and other ministry opportunities. Pamela married fellow graduate Bob Yoder on May 26. Her parents are Susan Gardner of Bristol, Ind.; and Richard and Margo Bressler of Dowagiac, Mich.

Korey Dyck serves as administrative assistant for the Peace and Justice Collaborative, a joint program of AMBS, Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., and Goshen College, Goshen, Ind. Mary Yoder Holsopple, director of the Collaborative, congratulated Korey after the service in which he received the Master of Arts in Peace Studies degree.

Left to right: Kim Chen, Kathy Colliver, Lisa Drew, Korey Dyck Not pictured: Kathleen Miller Crook

Kim Chao-Chin Chen. MATS in theology and ethics. Will pursue a doctor of ministry degree at Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Ky. Kim is married to Cherry Wu and they have two daughters. He is a member of Meilun Mennonite Church in Hualien City, Taiwan. He previously earned a Master of Divinity degree from China Evangelical Seminary in Taiwan.

Kathy Jean Colliver. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Ft. Wayne, Ind. Kathy is a member of Souderton Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., and her parents are Glen and Verna Colliver of Lansdale, Pa.; and Charlene Highfill of Middletown, Ohio.

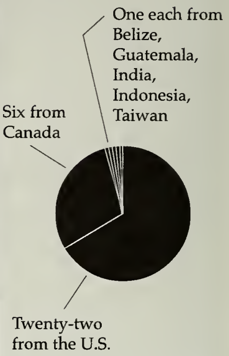
Kathleen Miller Crook. (Not pictured) MDiv. Will continue as pastor at St. Paul's Memorial United Methodist Church, South Bend, Ind. Kathy and Kevin, her husband, have four children. Her parents are Kenneth and Martha Peters of Flushing, Mich.

Lisa L. Drew. MACF. Will begin in August as full-time youth minister for Brecksville United Methodist Church, Cleveland, Ohio. Lisa is a member of the St. Johns United Church of Christ in Elkhart, where she has been youth minister for eight years. Her parents are Arthur and Cheryl Drew of Fredonia, Pa.

Korey Dyck. MAPS. Serves as the administrative assistant for the Peace and Justice Collaborative of AMBS, Goshen College and Andrews University. Korey is a member of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man. His parents are Peter and Marlene Dyck of Winnipeg.

Kristen Mathies, at right, completed the Master of Arts in Peace Studies degree early in 2001 and began a voluntary service assignment in the Mennonite Central Committee United National office. She returned to AMBS to participate in the commencement festivities. With her is Nisha Springer, who began as AMBS registrar in June 2001.

Graduates represent seven countries



Left to right: Donna Emmons, Stewart Forrester, Willmar Harder, Emma Hartman, Stefanus Haryono

Donna Emmons. MATS in theology and ethics. Will participate in Clinical Pastoral Education at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend, Ind. Donna is a member of St. Matthew's Cathedral of South Bend.

Stewart Forrester. MDiv. Will participate in Clinical Pastoral Education in summer and fall; then will pursue military chaplaincy. Stewart is a member of White Pigeon United Methodist Church, White Pigeon, Mich. He has one child and is the son of Donald and Nancy Forrester of Pleasant Lake, Ind.

Willmar Harder. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., beginning in September. Willmar is married to Hannah Neufeld, and is the son of Gordon and Eva Harder of Mountain Lake, Minn.

Emma Hartman. MACF. Will work as administrative assistant in the offices of the Central District Conference. Emma is a member of Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind., and has four children.

Stefanus Haryono. MACF. Will return as a pastor to Indonesia and "begin to realize a vision of forming a spiritual center for the Mennonite Church in Indonesia." Stefanus is a member of Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia (GKMI), Pati, Jawa Tengah. His parents are Tjahaja and Enawati, Semarang, Jawa Tengah. He previously earned a degree at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta.

Christian Heydorn. (Not pictured) MATS in biblical studies. Will pursue doctoral studies in ancient Near Eastern History. Christian is a member of the Elkhart Bahá'á community. His parents are Deborah Brown of Phoenix, Ariz., and Jean Heydorn of Cottonwood, Ariz.

"The gospel comes alive as it is embodied by those who call themselves followers of Christ," Patricia Shelly reminded graduates in the commencement address.

Commencement

"Embody the word of God"

In the commencement address, AMBS graduates were challenged to be a "sixth gospel."

"If the land of Israel-Palestine can be called the fifth gospel," commencement speaker Patricia Shelly said, "then our encounter with the lives of people of faith can be called the sixth gospel."

Patty Shelly, who is associate professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, N. Newton, Kan., returned to that post last fall after spending four years in Israel-Palestine with Mennonite Central Committee. She drew examples of Christians there who modeled lives of faith and asked graduates to think about people who have helped them draw more closely to Jesus.

She emphasized that we must recognize that God is the author of life and the source of the good news we share, then "the sixth gospel is a call to each of us to embody the word of God so our lives are a proclamation of the love of Christ."

Left to right: Heather Klassen, Tanya Kurtz Lehman, Esther Maddimadugu, Kristen Mathies Not pictured: Susannah Gerber Lepley

Heather Klassen. MATS in spirituality and ethics. She and Byron Remple, her husband, will serve with Mennonite Central Committee at Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia, starting in September. She is a member of Rundle United Church, Banff, Alb. Her parents are Alice and John Klassen of Coaldale.

Tanya Kurtz Lehman. MATS in Christian Spirituality. Will continue working on an organic farm in Vermont and continue work as a spiritual director and fabric artist. Tanya is married to Kevin Kurtz Lehman and is a member of Salem Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio. Her parents are Sam Kurtz and Treva Kurtz.

Susannah Gerber Lepley. (Not pictured) MAPS. Future plans are in process. She is married to Shawn Lepley and they live in Harrisonburg, Va. Her parents are Robert and Fran Gerber.

Esther Maddimadugu. MATS in theology and ethics. Will pursue a Master of Arts in Peace Studies degree from AMBS. Her parents are Das and Doris Maddimadugu of Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Kristen Mathies. MAPS. Will continue serving with Mennonite Voluntary Service in the Mennonite Central Committee United Nations office in New York City, N.Y. Kristen is a member of the Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church, Kitchener, Ont. Her parents are Gudrun and Ron Mathies of Ephrata, Pa.

Dolores Braun of Grunthal, Man., visits with Byron Remple and Heather Klassen following the commencement service. Byron and Heather, from Calgary and Banff, Alb., will begin a three-year term with Mennonite Central Committee in Indonesia later this summer.

Left to right: Amanda Rempel, Byron Remple, Pastor Romero, Pauline Steinmann
Not pictured: Michelle Salyer, Lynn Schlosser

Amanda Rempel. MATS in Christian Spirituality. Resumed work as chaplain at Kidron Bethel Village in North Newton, Kan. Amanda and Clarence, her husband, have four adult children. She is a member of First Mennonite Church, Newton. Her parents are John T. and Marie Friesen, Henderson, Neb.

Byron Remple. MACF in Christian education. He and Heather Klassen, his wife, will serve with Mennonite Central Committee at Satya Wacana Christian University, Indonesia, starting in September. He is a member of Foothills Mennonite Church, Calgary, Alb. and his parents are Peter and Norma Remple of Calgary.

Pastor A. Romero. MATS in biblical studies. Will serve as interim pastor for one year at Roselawn Mennonite Church in Elkhart, then return to Belize. Pastor is married to Lilian Romero and they have one son. He is a member of the Mennonite Church of August Pine Ridge, Orange Walk District, Belize. He previously earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from SEMILLA, the Mennonite seminary in Guatemala City.

Michelle Salyer. (Not pictured) MDiv. Is pursuing pastoral ministry while doing a voluntary internship and completing Clinical Pastoral Education this fall. Michelle is a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Elkhart. She is married to Kenneth Salyer and they have one child.

Lynn Schlosser. (Not pictured) MDiv. Will pursue a pastoral ministry assignment in the future. Her husband, Todd Schlosser, is on the pastoral team of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church, Morden, Man. Lynn's parents are Doug and Mary Ellwood of Little River, Kan.

Pauline Steinmann. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of Wildwood Mennonite Church, Saskatoon, Sask. She is a member of Mannheim Mennonite Church, Mannheim, Ont. Her parents are Arthur and Florence Steinmann of New Hamburg, Ont.

Willmar Harder will serve as pastor of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan., beginning in September. Originally from Mountain Lake, Minn., Willmar received the Master of Divinity degree. Part of his studies included a nine-month internship in the Hoffnungsau congregation. Karl Koop, shown with Willmar, is associate professor of theology and Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies.

Left to right: John David Thacker, Erica Thiessen, Linda Lehman Thomas, Jorge Vielman, Robert Yoder

Cheryl Stratton. (Not pictured) MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Grass Creek United Methodist Church, Kewanna, Ind. Cheryl is married to Robert Stratton.

John David E. Thacker. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of Prince of Peace Mennonite Church in Anchorage, Alaska, beginning in August. John David is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., and his parents are Ed and Linda Thacker of Springfield, Ohio.

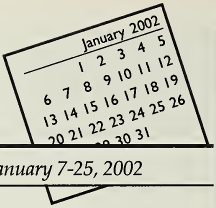
Erica Thiessen. MDiv. Is discerning membership in the ecumenical community "Benedictine Women of Madison" in Madison, Wisc. Erica is a member of Southside Fellowship in Elkhart. Her father is Victor Thiessen of Abbotsford, B.C. She previously earned a MATS degree from AMBS in 1990.

Linda Lehman Thomas. MATS in Christian Spirituality. Is developing a ministry of spiritual direction. Linda is married to Steve Thomas and they have three children. She is a member of Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen, and her parents are Merlin Lehman of Kidron, Ohio, and the late Janet Lehman.

Jorge Vielman. MAPS. Exploring a pastoral ministry or service assignment. Jorge and Sandra, his wife, have two children. He is a member of Iglesia Menonita del Buen Pastor, Goshen, Ind.

Robert Yoder. MDiv. Will serve as interim conference minister for youth and young adult ministries of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference and the eastern region of the Central District Conference. Bob and fellow graduate Pamela Bressler were married on May 26. He is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, and his parents are Creed and Miriam Yoder of Greencastle, Pa.

January at AMBS



Interterm *January 7-25, 2002*

Corinthian Correspondence
Jacob Elias, AMBS
Early Church History
Alan Kreider, Adjunct Faculty, AMBS
Peace and Justice: Latin American Perspectives
Mario Higueros, Rector, SEMILLA (Latin-America Anabaptist Seminary, Guatemala). Course meets in Guatemala.
Congregational Spirituality
Marlene Kropf, AMBS
Communion
Eleanor Kreider, Adjunct Faculty, AMBS
Women/Men: History and Vision
Lydia Harder, guest instructor
Global Urbanization and Mission *(January 1-30)*
Art McPhee, AMBS. Course involves study tour to Indian and Thailand.
Mennonite Church Polity *(January 14-25)*
Erick Sawatzky, AMBS

For more information, contact Randall C. Miller, admissions

Pastors' Week *January 28-31, 2002*

Family, Culture and the Household of God

How do we relate to culture? Is culture an enemy or is culture a friend? Should we emphasize separateness from, accommodation to, or caution about culture? This week of Bible study, lectures and workshops will explore how families and congregations can find resources to live in our current culture while maintaining a strong faith and identity as followers of Jesus Christ.

Presenters:
- Sara Wenger Shenk, associate dean and associate professor of Christian education, Eastern Mennonite Seminary
- Gary Yamasaki, Columbia Bible College, Abbotsford, B.C.
- April Yamasaki, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Abbotsford, B.C.

Worship leaders:
- Jim Stutzman-Amstutz, West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.
- Dawn Yoder Harms, Akron Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.

For more information, contact Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, Pastors' Week coordinator

Leadership Clinics *February 1, 2002*

In-depth clinics will be offered for pastors and church leaders. Specific sessions to be announced.

For more information, contact Jewel Gingerich Longenecker, Pastors' Week coordinator

AMBS Panorama

Another May graduate was Art McPhee, assistant professor of Mission and Evangelism, who received a Ph.D. degree from Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, Ky. Art's dissertation is a biography of J. Waskom Pickett, missionary in India whose experiences, research and insights led to the church growth movement. With Art are Evelyn McPhee, his wife, and Nisha Springer.

Advent planner

A one-day seminar on planning for Advent, featuring resources provided to Mennonite congregations in *Builder*, is scheduled for Thursday, September 27. Marlene Kropf and Karmen Krahn Fehr will be the presenters. For more information, contact the AMBS continuing education office.

Adjunct faculty named

Joe Kotva, Ph.D., has been named an adjunct faculty member of AMBS. He is pastor of First Mennonite Church of Allentown, Allentown, Pa.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Page 1, Steve Echols; graduate groups, J. Tyler Klassen; commencement photos, Mary E. Klassen.

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Canadian Mennonite and The Mennonite.

Summer 2001

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For COM-AIMM workers, South African AIDS crisis makes Bible teaching a matter of life and death

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Accompanied by a translator, Lynell Bergen, a Commission on Overseas Mission-Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker in South Africa, leads a recent Bible conference in Lusikisiki, South Africa. Bible conferences have become one more way for the local church to provide education and encourage compassion for victims of the region's rampant AIDS crisis.

UMTATA, South Africa—Sometimes something simple such as a handshake is the best way to communicate an important message.

In South Africa, nearly 20 percent of people between 15 and 49 are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and that percentage has doubled in the last five years. But South Africans have been slow to understand the severity of the problem.

In March, Brian Dyck, a Commission on Overseas Mission (COM)-Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) worker in South Africa, attended a conference in Umtata on HIV/AIDS and the church. The leader scattered folded pieces of paper on the ground. Each of the two dozen participants picked up a piece but were told not to open it. Each person then was told to shake hands with two other people. Then they could open their pieces of paper.

"Most people had a minus sign on their paper, but four people had a plus sign," Dyck says. "These were the HIV-positive people in our community.

"[The leader] said to the first HIV-positive person, 'Who did you shake hands with?' That person pointed to two people. [The leader] said, 'Now you two are HIV-positive, too.' … We didn't even follow all the possible paths of transmission before almost everyone was up front and infected.

"The message was powerful. People will sometimes say, 'But I had only two partners,' but that's enough. It became clear how little it takes for HIV to spread like wildfire. Of course, [the leader] emphasized that you can't get AIDS from shaking hands. But people got [the message]."

Conferences such as this are helping Dyck and his wife, Lynell Bergen, add to the arsenal in the fight against AIDS. After one session attended by Dyck, Bergen and several local African Independent Church bishops, the bishops decided they needed a Bible conference on AIDS and HIV. It is scheduled to be held this fall.

Bergen notes that sex has been a taboo subject for public discussion, including in the church. But the Umtata conference has given her courage to speak.

"I had two different opportunities to preach during Easter," Bergen says. "I used John 19:26 as my text: 'Woman, this is your son,' one of the Seven Last Words of Christ. I talked about Jesus extending compassion to those who were suffering. I wouldn't have used the passages the way I did, to talk about AIDS and compassion, if I hadn't been to the conference."

Work to address the disease is being done in other ways, as well. This past spring, at a series of Bible conferences on the role of women in the church, Bergen and Dyck spent significant time talking about culture and change. One of the stories that illustrates this involves the tradition of a man marrying his brother's widow. In the case of a particular community in Uganda, the leaders discovered that this tradition was literally killing their people because it spread HIV.

Bergen and Dyck, who have been in South Africa for two years, are staff members of Bethany Bible School, a theological education by extension program that works with African Independent Churches in and around Umtata. Bible teaching and leadership training have always been the focus of COM-AIMM work in South Africa, nurturing and strengthening the indigenous Christian church and the faith and knowledge of its people. But with the rampant spread of HIV and AIDS, the work has literally become a life-and-death struggle.

"The culture is changing," Dyck says. "It seems to be less family-oriented and village-centered, with hierarchy breaking down. The definition of leadership is changing, and leaders are going to have to work in new ways to bring order to their communities."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Scholarships give peace a chance

Members of the historic peace churches in Kokomo, Ind., were tired of seeing the military glorified through its scholarships to graduating high school seniors. So they decided to do something about it.

Since 1991, Howard-Miami Mennonite Church and Parkview Mennonite Church have joined with two area Friends meetings and a Church of the Brethren congregation to offer peace scholarships. One $750 recipient and one $500 recipient are chosen from students from 11 local high schools who submit an essay on a peace-related topic.

Seventeen seniors wrote essays this year. First place went to Laura Stone, a member of the Church of the Brethren, while second place went to Grace Bauson, a United Methodist.—*Gospel Evangel*

China acts against exchange program

CEE can no longer officially send teachers to country

Peace institute recognizes worker

Longtime General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) peace worker Harold Regier was honored July 15 with the first Peacemaker Award from the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR).

Regier and his wife, Rosella, now of Newton, Kan., served in Gulfport, Miss., in the 1960s with the GC Board of Missions. From 1970 to 1979, he was the GC secretary for peace and social concerns.

In 1981, Regier founded the Harvey County, Kan., victim-offender program, which grew to include the M-2 prison visitation program and a program for shoplifters. He retired in 1998.

KIPCOR, founded in 1985, is affiliated with Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

NEWTON, Kan—After 20 years of operation in China, the inter-Mennonite program China Educational Exchange (CEE) is facing increased scrutiny by Chinese authorities.

CEE sends English teachers from North America to universities and technical schools throughout China and facilitates exchanges for Chinese scholars and teachers to spend time at Mennonite schools in North America.

Beijing's State Foreign Experts Bureau, an umbrella organization that loosely oversees foreign educational programs, has informed CEE administrators that CEE can no longer officially send English teachers to China. Reasons for the suspension have not been given.

CEE's educational and church partners in China have encouraged the organization's teachers to remain in the country on individual contracts that they sign rather than having CEE do it on their behalf. New teachers can still go to China with CEE but for now will need to make their own visa applications and other arrangements.

"Despite the recent difficulties, universities and CEE partner agencies in China remain very supportive and continue to welcome English teachers from North America," says CEE director Myrrl Byler.

CEE staff this fall will deliver a requested written report on the organization's activities to the State Foreign Experts Bureau, after which there could be a reversal of the suspension. "More information on the suspension may be forthcoming, but it is also possible that the true reasons will not be made known," Byler says.

Meanwhile, the supporting agencies of CEE—Commission on Overseas Mission, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and the Mennonite Brethren's MBMS International—plan to have 36 teachers in China for the coming academic year, Byler says. All other activities will also continue, including bringing exchange professors to North America.—*GCMC News Service*

Ethiopians hold third commencement of the year

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia—For the students of Meserete Kristos College, there is no time like the present. Rather than holding one commencement ceremony a year, the school graduates a class when it has finished its work and sends them off to serve as pastors and evangelists for the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia.

Meserete Kristos College, located in Addis Ababa, held its third commencement of the school year on May 26, recognizing 19 students who have completed two years of studies in Bible and Christian ministries. Fifteen received a two-year diploma, and four received an associate of arts degree.

Twenty graduates were granted their diplomas on Dec. 16, 2000, while another 36 were honored on Feb. 2.

Since the school's inception in 1994, 391 students have graduated from Meserete Kristos College programs. Of these, 292 were participants in the six-week orientation course for the church's One Year for Christ volunteer evangelism program. Fifty-eight students were in the one-year certificate program, 25 in the two-year diploma program and 15 in the associate degree program.

The college also offers a four-year degree program in Bible and Christian ministries. The first class is expected to graduate next May.

With a 17 percent annual growth rate and 30 new congregations a year, leadership training has become a priority for the Meserete Kristos Church. But those efforts are not keeping up, as denominational membership has reached 73,000.—*Carl Hanson*

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MCC photo by Linda Shelly

In the bag

Mennonite Central Committee workers Patrocinio Garvizu (left) and Doug Beane help a family in Juan Ramos, Bolivia, sort carioca beans from this spring's harvest. Garvizu and another MCC worker in the community have been encouraging farmers to grow new crops, such as beans. The harvested beans will be taken by donkey to the town of Moro Moro, a five-hour walk away. Garvizu and another MCC worker in Juan Ramos, Cresencia Garcia, also promote nutrition through raising vegetables and chickens and recently completed a water-system project.

Canadians blanket court for Aboriginal rights

OTTAWA—An estimated 1,000 blankets were spread across the lawn of Canada's Supreme Court June 21 to mark National Aboriginal Day and to call for the return of land to North America's first citizens.

The blankets arrived by train from across Canada. After more than three days on the rails collecting blankets from church, Aboriginal and community groups along the way, 70 riders joined more than 100 other supporters on the Supreme Court lawn for a rally. Among the riders were representatives of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada.

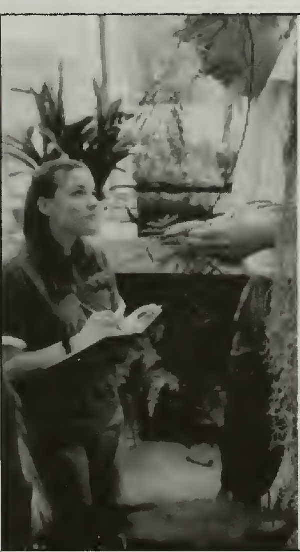
"This was significant as both a gesture of friendship and a call for change," says Rick Zerbe Cornelsen, Aboriginal Neighbours coordinator for MCC Canada. "Ottawa needs to know that while Aboriginal people can speak for themselves they do not stand alone."

Riders also collected petition signatures as they traveled as part of a campaign calling on the federal government to establish a commission to implement Aboriginal land rights.

MCC Canada executive director Dave Dyck joined in signing the petition during a ceremony that followed the unrolling of the blankets. Speakers included Ovide Mercredi, former Assembly of First Nations National Chief, who spoke on the importance of solidarity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.—*MCC Canada News Service*

Ottawa needs to know that while Aboriginal people can speak for themselves they do not stand alone.

—Rick Zerbe Cornelson



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this date in Mennonite history

July 24, 1683—The ship Concord sails from Gravesend, England, with the first Mennonites to land in the New World.

Mennonite Church Canada now legal

WINNIPEG—With a nod of her head, Canada's Governor General, Adrienne Clarkson, approved the legal creation of Mennonite Church Canada. Her action ratified changes in the act of incorporation to transform the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) into the new denomination.

The changes include allowing Mennonite Church Canada to act outside the country. CMC mission work had to be done through the General Conference Mennonite Church or supported through designated giving apart from the general budget. Another change allows Mennonite Church Canada to buy and sell property.

Since the 1999 decision by delegates to reconfigure the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church into two national bodies, a committee had been working on incorporation changes and submitted its final work to federal authorities in April. *—Canadian Mennonite*

Giving to EMU reaches $4.7 million in 2000-2001

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg received $4.7 million in gift income for the 2000-2001 fiscal year, the third highest total in school history. Some $2.7 million was received in restricted gifts. Undesignated gifts totaled $1.17 million.

School alumni gave the most with nearly $2.2 million in restricted and undesignated gifts. Contributions from businesses totaled $349,000, up 24 percent from last year, while congregations added $306,000, up 16 percent.

Medical professionals hold annual convention

MOUNT PLEASANT, Pa.—The annual convention of the Mennonite Medical Association and Mennonite Nurses Association drew 177 adults and children to Laurelville Mennonite Church Center June 21-24. Activities included workshops on topics such as ethical health-care decisions, mental illness and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; a plenary presentation by Erland Waltner, former president of Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; and worship.

Ontario pastor named to CHM Asia position

NEWTON, Kan.—Kuaying Teng of St. Catharines, Ont., has been appointed half-time director of Asian Resource Ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries. He will work out of his home in St. Catharines, where he is also co-pastor of Lao Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation. Teng had earlier served as a liaison between CHM and the Lao Mennonite Conference.*—GCMC News Service*

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Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is seeking a regional vice president for Kansas and parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma to provide strong leadership to its insurance and financial services sales force. This position will recruit, mentor, and hire agents, oversee direct marketing, and be responsible to establish and achieve regional sales goals.

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Events

Gulfhaven Mennonite Church 80th anniversary celebration, Sept. 7-9, Gulfport, Miss. For information, contact 228-328-0045; <conradpr@juno.com>.

Peacemaker Congress VI, Sept. 20-23, "Sustainable Peacemaking: Building Connections for Change," near Fort Wayne, Ind. For information, contact Christian Peacemaker Teams, 312-455-1199; <cpt@igc.org>.

Births

Bilen, Kelly Faith, June 8, to Rita (Schrock) and Sheridan Bilen, Archbold, Ohio.

Breneman, Julia Grace, June 20, to Angela and Alan Breneman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Brubaker, Landon Rebecca, June 2, to Chris and Shannon (Sherman) Brubaker, Amity, Ore.

Cordell, Jaclyn Mae, June 6, to Johanna and Lynn Cordell, Chambersburg, Pa.

Cortez, Marigny Grace, June 28, to Darlene (Dufrene) and Ryan Cortez, Des Allemands, La.

Derstine, Nathaniel David, June 14, to Karen (Halteman) and Kevin Derstine, Souderton, Pa.

Epp, Kaitlyn Marie, June 19, received for adoption by Nathan and Sheila (Peters) Epp, Whitewater, Kan.

Fetterman, Timothy Evan, June 12, to Amie and Dan Fetterman, Kirkwood, Pa.

Froese, Jacquelyn Elisabeth, May 19, to Richard and Kimberley Froese, London, Ont.

Good, Joseph Allen, May 30, to Jane and Vernon Good, Goshen, Ind.

Gyrion, Sierra Danae, June 12, to Larry and Sherri (Delagrange) Gyrion, Goshen, Ind.

Holdeman, Theocharis Shelton, June 12, to Bruce and Jennifer Holdeman, Lakewood, Colo.

Jensen, Jaedon Paul, June 19, to Keith and Michelle (Ropp) Jensen, Sarasota, Fla.

Kirby, Janelle Rochelle, June 17, to Bill and Janelle (Birky) Kirby, Portland, Ind.

Koffel, Christopher Michael, June 6, to Caryn (Holden) and Kyle Koffel, Souderton, Pa.

Miller, Carter Lee, June 11, to Heather and Tim Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Davin Matthew, June 15, to Kristina Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Micah Andrew, June 6, to Matt and Renae (Bender) Miller, North Liberty, Iowa.

Neer, Jacob Paul, June 25, to Angie (Yoder) and Paul Neer, Belleville, Pa.

Neufeld-Wall, Maya Elizabeth, May 31, to Mary Beth and Scott Neufeld-Wall, St. Louis.

Read, Carmen Patricia, May 11, to Cheryl Buehler and Ted Read, Elmira, Ont.

Schlabach, Fisher Lee, June 10, to Amy (Wiseman) and Brad Schlabach, Sarasota, Fla.

Schroeder, Eric Tuff, May 17, to Brian and Shirl Schroeder, Steinbach, Man.

Shank, Ian Jeremiah, June 27, to Cherina (Lehman) and D. Michael Shank, Chambersburg, Pa.

Shetler, Seth Steven, May 25, to Jennifer (Harrington) and Willard Shetler, Goshen, Ind.

Wiebe, Ella Michelle, June 24, to Kent and Michelle Wiebe, Winnipeg.

Zickafoose, Grace Lillian, June 5, to Jennifer (Liechty) and Jon Zickafoose, Lima, Ohio.

Marriages

Abrahams/Ashley: Brandy Abrahams, Goessel, Kan., and Nathan Ashley, Goessel, June 2 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Asbun/Yoder: Claudia Asbun, North Canton, Ohio, and Jeremy Yoder, North Canton, June 23 at Miami Beach, Fla.

Bender/Wilt: Benjamin Bender, Iowa City, Iowa, and Tricia Wilt, Iowa City, June 9 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Brubaker/Sterling: Eric Brubaker, Harrisonburg, Va., and Peggy Sterling, Westminster, Md., June 16 at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.

Buller/Funk: Shane Buller, Goessel, Kan., and Letha Funk, Goessel, May 28 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Carson/Pauls: Andrea Carson, Pueblo, Colo., and Rod Pauls, Colorado Springs, Colo., June 1 at Pueblo.

Corbett/Stanford: Cristen Corbett, Glenfield, N.Y., and Mark Stanford, Glenfield, June 16 at First Mennonite of New Bremen, Lowville, N.Y.

Duerksen/Jacks: Lucius Duerksen, Goessel, Kan., and Megan Jacks, Wichita, Kan., June 16 at Goessel.

Edwards/Miller: Caleb Edwards, Sanford, Fla., and Stacy Miller, Millersburg, Ind., May 26 at Pleasant Oaks Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Fox/Reinford: Gail Fox, Sellersville, Pa., and Kendall Reinford, Quakertown, Pa., June 9 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Guengerich/Peifer: Larry Guengerich, Lancaster, Pa., and Kendra Peifer, Lancaster, June 22 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Heatwole/Maury: Elizabeth Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va., and Douglas Maury, Milford, Neb., June 23 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Hess/Linder: Ryan Hess, Lancaster, Pa., and Maria Linder, Lancaster, June 2 at St. James Episcopal Church, Lancaster.

Hostetler/Kerstetter: Lenora Hostetler, Halifax, Pa., and Ronald Kerstetter, Halifax, June 23 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover, Md.

Jakubowiczz/Miller: Paul Jakubowiczz, Sarasota, Fla., and Leah Miller, Sarasota, June 16 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Johnson/Thiessen: Eric Johnson and Jeri Thiessen, May 26 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Kipfer/Wirth: Justin Kipfer, Darien Center, N.Y. and Christine Wirth, Varysburg, N.Y., May 26.

Landis/Landis: Eric Landis, Telford, Pa., and Tracy Landis, Souderton, Pa., June 16 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

MacPherson/Martin: Gordon MacPherson, Ottawa, and Elizabeth Martin, Ottawa, June 2 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Mast/Smith: Sharla Mast, Sarasota, Fla., and Kenneth Smith, Bradenton, Fla., May 25 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Meeks/Ulrich: Michael Meeks, Haileyville, Okla., and Amy Ulrich, Henderson, Neb., May 5 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Niehage/Unruh: Nicole Niehage, Moundridge, Kan., and Christopher Unruh, Galva, Kan., June 9.

Ressler/Roemer: Alan Ressler, Kennett Square, Pa., and Pamela Roemer, Kennett Square, May 5 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Ritenburg/Smith: Peter Ritenburg, Alden, N.Y., and Rachael Smith, Alden, June 9.

Stanford/Streeter: Wilbur Stanford, Glenfield, N.Y., and Erica Streeter, Beaver Falls, N.Y., May 12 at First Mennonite of New Bremen, Lowville, N.Y.

Thomas/Yoder: Jeremiah Thomas, Johnstown, Pa., and Katie Ruth Yoder, Boswell, Pa., June 9 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Yoder/Yoder: Christina Yoder, Uniontown, Ohio, and Josh Yoder, Uniontown, June 23 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Auernheimer, Jacob Christian, 95, Reedley, Calif., died May 24. Spouse: Bonnie Margaret Warnock Auernheimer (deceased). Survivors: children Bruce, Karen Sweeting, Irene Healy; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Bontrager, Sarah Roth, 90, Scottdale, Pa., died April 1. Spouse: Eli Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Nicholas and Mary Wagler Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Lucille Yoder, June Schrock, Joyce Millslagle, Charlotte, Candace Frey, Bonnie Norris; 17 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Alden (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Davis, Katherine L., 89, Pekin, Ill., died June 20. Spouse: Willard Davis (deceased). Parents: Wiley Franklin and Ruth M. Farmer (deceased). Survivors: children William, Walter, John, Shirley Reach; 15 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Preston-Hanley Funeral Home, Pekin, Ill.

Fly, Maurice L., 58, Sellersville, Pa., died June 20 of colorectal carcinoma. Parents: Harold and Mary L. Fly (deceased). Survivor: son Christopher. Memorial service: June 30 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Fransen, Werner K., 59, Normal, Ill., died June 1 from a pedestrian-car accident. Spouse: Kay Ann Schrag Fransen. Parents: Nicholas and Tina Fransen (deceased). Other survivors: children Sharon Fransen Landis, Suzanne Marie Fransen Hitt; one grandchild. Funeral: June 6 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Froese, Elisabeth, 93, Steinbach, Man., died June 2. Funeral: June 7 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Fry, Idella Zimmerman, 96, Morton, Ill., died June 8. Spouse: Clarence Fry (deceased). Parents: Caleb and Lena Zimmerman (deceased). Survivors: two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Gerber, Anna Miller, 81, LaGrange, Ind., died June 19. Spouse: Walter L. Gerber. Parents: John W. and Elizabeth Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Serena F. Howard, Robert; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Hoffman, Rebecca, 92, Cambridge, Ont., died June 19. Parents: Menno and Susannah Eby Hoffman (deceased). Funeral: June 22 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Horst, Elvin M., 69, Manheim, Pa., died June 30. Spouse: Arlene R. Shenk Horst. Parents: Paul and Eva Martin Horst (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Andrea Stoltzfus. Funeral: July 5 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hostetler, Arline D. Conrad, 86, Louisville, Ohio, died June 21. Spouse: Garrison Hostetler. Parents: Jonathan and Laura Liechty Conrad (deceased). Other survivors: children Sheila, Theodore; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Huntsberger, John H., 94, Orrville, Ohio, died June 26. Spouse: Ruth Wenger Huntsberger. Parents: Samuel M. and Ida Ellen Huntsberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Donovan, Maurice, Doris Zaugg; 10 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 29 at Auble Funeral Home, Orrville, Ohio.

Mast, Katherine (Katie), 92, Grantsville, Md., died April 18 of pneumonia. Funeral: April 23 at Alden (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, Evelyn, 89, Freeman, S.D., died June 19. Spouse: Edgar Miller (deceased). Parents: Elias and Anna (Graber) Schrag (deceased). Survivors: daughter Anita Neufeld; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 21 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Musselman, Virginia, 81, Lima, Ohio, died April 18. Spouse: Richard Musselman. Parents: Melvin S. and Mayme Palmer Burkholder (deceased). Funeral: April 20 at Lima Mennonite Church.

Oswald, Raymond, 85, Kalona, Iowa, died June 1 of respiratory failure. Spouse: Alma Bohn Oswald. Parents: Daniel and Kate Oswald Oswald (deceased). Other survivors: children Loretta Martinson, Stella Hathaway, Roberta Fast, Lonny, Delvan; 13 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 4 at Beemer (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Penner, Mary Joyce Gehrer, 72, Reedley, Calif., died June 15 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Gustav Penner. Parents: Mildred and Howard Gehrer (deceased). Other survivors: children Josef, Herbert, David, Peter; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: June 20 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Reusser, Gail Winton, 87, Moundridge, Kan., died June 21. Spouse: Selma Ediger Reusser. Parents: Abe and Mable Schlender Reusser (deceased). Other survivors: children Joan Turetsky, Beverly, Mary; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Scheffel, Clarence L. Sr., 79, Reedsville, Pa., died June 4. Spouse: Viola Scheffel (deceased). Parents: Lee and Mattie Scheffel (deceased). Survivors: children Elaine Smith, Ezra, Clara Kauffman, Clarence Jr., William; 19 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 7 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Schwartzentruber, Glenn, 74, Tavistock, Ont., died June 20. Spouse: Fannie Mae Schumm Schwartzentruber. Parents: David and Barbara Schwartzentruber (deceased). Other survivors: children Brian, Tim, Mary Lou; six grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Tavistock, Ont.

Staurseth, Michele Erb, 47, Goshen, Ind., died April 27 of cancer. Spouse: Michael Staurseth. Parents: Ezra and Barbara Erb. Funeral: May 2 at Alden (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Josephine Schwartz, 93, Middlebury, Ind., died June 13. Spouse: Harvey Troyer (deceased). Parents: Peter and Barbara Schwartz Schwartz (deceased). Survivors: daughter Dorthelda Eichorn; five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Troyer, Lester, 77, West Point, Neb., died June 20 of respiratory failure. Spouse: Gladys Erb Troyer. Parents: Abraham and Emma Eichelberger Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Friesen, Gayle Frey, Randy; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 23 at Beemer (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Wiens, Kathryn Friesen, 75, Inman, Kan., died June 20. Spouse: Walter Wiens. Parents: Dietrich and Maria Wiens Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Gail, Randall, Carrie Moser, Connie Luty; nine grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Inman Mennonite Church.

classifieds

- **"Get on the Road"** Aug. 31-Sept. 2 at ***Amigo Centre***, Sturgis, Mich. High school sophomores, juniors and seniors are invited to celebrate diversity and seek to end racism with MCC Great Lakes Damascus Road Team.

  Contact Amigo at 616-651-2811 or <info@amigocentre.org>.

- **Frazer Mennonite Church**, located in suburban Philadelphia, is seeking a half-time ***minister of children and youth***. Frazer Mennonite Church is a compassionate community walking with Christ toward peace and wholeness. This is an opportunity to creatively expand existing programs and develop new ideas in meeting the needs of children and youth.

  Please contact Jason Kuniholm at 610-644-3397 or <jasonholm9@cs.com> for application and further information.

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- **Drift Creek Conference and Retreat Center**, on the beautiful Oregon Coast, Lincoln City, seeks an ***administrative director or co-administrators***. Drift Creek Camp is located in the Oregon Coast Range Mountains, 13 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Full-time, year-round position, beginning Jan. 1, 2002. Responsible for administration, program planning, development, staff and volunteer coordination. Prior related experience desired.

  For additional information and application materials, contact Gwen Peachy, 2713 NW Arnold Way, Corvallis, OR 97330; 541-754-6336; <gpeachey@yahoo.com>.

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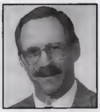

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by Rich Preheim

Church work as a matter of course

Maybe Tiger Woods will become the patron saint of fund-raisers. Thanks in large part to his phenomenal golf success, the sport's popularity has skyrocketed. And that includes among Christian organizations, which are increasingly hitting the links to open wallets and save souls, reports *Faith Today.*

For some, golf tournaments have become important sources of income. Koinonia Christian Academy in Bloomingdale, Ont., held a golf marathon in 1999 that netted the school $55,204. Trinity Western Reserve University in Langley, B.C., last spring raised $30,000 in one tournament.

"Fun, fellowship and fund raising is our model—and that's the order it goes in, too," says Steve Scholtz, one of the Trinity tournament organizers.

But not every visit to the golf course is for the purpose of financial gain. There are communal and spiritual benefits, as well. Philip Lowe organizes tournaments for Evangelical Chinese Bible Church, Burnaby, B.C., as a way to extend the congregation's witness.

"A lot of people just laugh and say, 'You're just going out to have fun and call it evangelizing,' " Lowe says. "And, of course, we do have fun. But [golf] does work. Ministry is done through bonding. You build up that relationship and eventually share Christ. There's no better place than to go out on the golf course and spend four hours together."

Abortion protest

For the first time since 1974, the Catholic peace organization Pax Christi USA has canceled its annual assembly, which had been scheduled for Aug. 3-5 at Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tenn. The Catholic school refused to allow on campus a speaker who supports abortion rights.

James Lawson, longtime civil rights worker and retired United Methodist minister, was slated to deliver the keynote address. He is also outspoken in his views on abortion and has served on the board of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Rights.

"We invited Rev. Lawson to speak about building a culture of peace through nonviolence, which was the theme of our national assembly," Nancy Smalls, Pax Christi USA national coordinator, tells *National Catholic Reporter.* "We did not invite him to speak about abortion."

Christian Brothers president Stan Sobczyk did not respond to interview requests. But Smalls says the university feared a backlash of protest by abortion foes.

She says the decision to cancel the assembly was a matter of principle. "Pax Christi USA has a longstanding practice of refusing to make judgments about the moral fitness of individuals based on a litmus test of any single issue," she says.

A biblical model?

Buzz from the entertainment world has supermodel Claudia Schiffer stepping off the pages of *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* to appear in ... the Bible? Four Swedish entrepreneurs are producing the King James Version of the Old Testament in a high-gloss, magazine-style format, illustrated with some of the world's top models. Schiffer reportedly will be Eve, says *Christian Week.*

The goal is to attract young people who rarely read the Bible, says Gustaf-Wilhelm Hellstedt, one of the project's creators. "Forget those old sketches of the Bible," he says. "Instead of a boring drawing of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, we may well have a couple walking down a New York street, kissing."

The book is expected to be released later this year.

Down the tube

In the rerun-filled world of TV, Midlothian (Va.) Friends Meeting is at work preparing for a second season of its program. But it's not a program to get on the tube but rather to get something off it, according to *Quaker Life.*

April 15 was Midlothian's first GunFreeDayOnTV, advocating that TV networks on Easter Sunday not broadcast any show or commercials with guns or gun-related violence. The second such day will be March 31, 2002. Meeting members distributed information and bumper stickers, and their website contains pertinent data and provides ways to register concerns with TV executives and congressional representatives.

The intersection of mathematics and theology

After being transported to heaven one night, the Muslim prophet Muhammad reported seeing an angel with 70,000 heads, each head with 70,000 faces, each face with 70,000 mouths, each mouth with 70,000 tongues, and each tongue speaking in 70,000 languages to praise God. That comes to 1.6807 septillion languages, reports *The Christian Century.*

Tidbits

- Seventy-one percent of U.S. Christian congregations have fewer than 100 regularly participating adults.—*Family Ministry*
- The Community of Christ, (formerly the Reorganized Church of of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) has approved the creation of its first seminary.—*Herald*
- A group in Pittsburg, Kan., has formed Church Secretaries Anonymous.—*The Joyful Noiseletter*
- Denominational or organizational subsidies account for 40 percent of the budgets of Christian magazines. —*Pepperdine University*
- Thirty-five percent of congregations take three to six months to prepare their budgets, while 10 percent take less than one month. —*Leadership*

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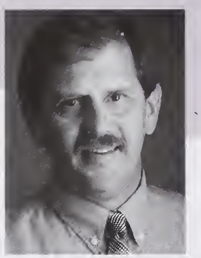

Everett J. Thomas

Transformation for *The Mennonite*

This magazine was created out of its two predecessors: *Gospel Herald* and the former *The Mennonite.* In 1997, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) leaders requested that the two magazines come together into a single new periodical as a demonstration of their resolve to transform both traditions into a new Mennonite Church.

In the inaugural issue on Feb. 17, 1998, founding editor J. Lorne Peachey wrote: "What you hold in your hands is the first issue of a publication that looks toward a new, integrated Mennonite Church."

Forty-one months later, we know that this "new, integrated Mennonite Church" will become a reality. Managed by a specially formed Interim Periodical Board, this magazine has also been transformed, and more changes are on the way.

For starters, there is the matter of the governance structure for *The Mennonite.* At the Nashville 2001 convention, July 2-7, delegates approved a separately incorporated board of directors that will connect to the denomination in a way quite different from the connections for either *Gospel Herald* (published by the MC Mennonite Publishing House) or the former *The Mennonite* (published by the General Conference Mennonite Church through its Division of General Services). Some members of the magazine's new board will be appointed by the Executive Board; other members will be elected by delegates at the biennial assemblies.

Such an arrangement will provide *The Mennonite* with a position semi-independent from Mennonite Church USA structures, thus affording a measure of journalistic objectivity as we report on denominational news and issues. However, because the church will select board members and because the Executive Board reserves the right to approve the editor, *The Mennonite* also remains accountable to the church.

But a change in governance is not the only transformation in the offing. The design, format and tone of the magazine will also be changed in the next five months. As Peachey explained in that first editorial, "This publication [is] a work in progress. What you see is not what you'll continually get."

Creating the current look and design of this magazine in five months in late 1997 was a great challenge to Peachey and the newly seated Interim Periodical Board. At every step of the way, Peachey and his design consultant wished to create a magazine that looked brand new and distinctly different from either the *Gospel Herald* or the former *The Mennonite.* The result was this two-color, weekly periodical with a few elements carried over from its predecessors.

Now, 166 issues later, we anticipate the official beginning of the new Mennonite Church USA on Feb. 1, 2002. To mark the beginning of this new church, we will debut our new design on Jan. 8. The changes will be extensive.

The cover and at least half the magazine will be printed in full color. We will also move to an every-other-week format with at least 32 pages in each issue rather than the 16-page standard we have currently. This schedule will give our staff more time for original reporting and analysis of events occurring across the church. Since our postal rates increased by nearly 20 percent in 2001, this frequency will also provide significant savings in postage and handling costs.

Our new relationship with Mennonite Church USA also calls us to view the church in ways that a pastor might view a congregation. While listening to the heartbeat of conferences and congregations, we want to continue developing a tone in our reporting that reveals deep appreciation for this new church as it unfolds over the next few years.

The process which has transformed our denomination is also changing *The Mennonite.* Such transformation will enable us to better fulfill our mission: help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.—*ejt*

We want to continue developing a tone in our reporting that reveals deep appreciation for this new church as it unfolds over the next few years.

No issue next week: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated August 7.

Give us your counsel!

For new cover design options, check our website,
www.themennonite.org
Then, use the form available to
let us know what you think.

the Mennonite

August 7, 2001

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with food and fun

pages 6-9

6 Recipes from church leaders
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11 African AIDS crisis a 'pastoral challenge'
20 Miracle to miracle

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Nashville sounds

The July 17 issue contains a number of references to the action of the Spirit at the joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention at Nashville, Tenn. But I don't believe the Holy Spirit was responsible for the refusal of the convention to pass a statement against the killing of babies inside their mothers' wombs.

The resolutions committee offered the excuse that existing statements adopted in 1975 and 1980 are sufficient. That doesn't wash. The abortion situation now is so much worse than anyone imagined in 1980 that it cries out to be addressed anew. Infanticide—specifically, puncturing the skulls and suctioning out the brains of those in the process of being born—is now openly, legally practiced in this country. Body parts are commonly "harvested" from aborted babies, then bought and sold like car parts. Now it is proposed that "leftover" human lives conceived by in vitro fertilization—a process that has become more widespread since 1980—be killed and used as raw materials for human tissue production.

In light of the grisly developments of the last two decades, how can Mennonites justify sitting on a 20-year-old statement—and a weakly worded one at that? Silence and denial never lead to healing, only to further guilt and suffering. It's a simple, psychological fact that honest and frank recognition of one's sins is always the first step in genuine healing. If we really want to help postabortive women, we do them no service by keeping quiet on this issue.

It's easy to speak against the death penalty. The news media, academia, the Hollywood establishment—the most respected people of our day—are all with us, cheering us on. But to speak against abortion is to invite ridicule and contempt from these same people. How could we expect otherwise? As Jesus has warned us many times, if we are faithful, we will be ridiculed. We must be faithful anyway. —*Kathy Scharplaz, Minneapolis, Kan.*

The resolution approved at Nashville 2001 in opposition to capital punishment has a critical flaw where it urges congregations to hold public opposition vigils "at murder sites." Would you want strangers meeting on your front lawn, where your daughter was recently raped and murdered, to express compassion, not for you or in memory of your daughter but for her killer? Do you think your grief-stricken neighbor would want her murdered husband's farm or business turned into a vigil site on the death penalty without her knowledge or permission?

The blood-stained site of the murder is not an appropriate place to demonstrate for or against the death penalty. Holding any kind of issue-oriented public event at the memorial site of a murdered loved one is almost always going to be felt as offensive and insensitive to the victim's family. It was an error in judgment for that location to be named in the resolution and wrong for the resolutions committee to not delete those three words in the half hour provided for corrections to be made after this concern was raised by a delegate.

Please do not hold any vigils, other than those with the blessing of the victim's entire family, at the place of the murder.—*David Voth, Bluffton, Ohio*

Nashville 2001 holds many memories for me, but one I would like to share happened to us as we were leaving the city. We were about five miles from the Opryland Hotel when a car pulled up beside us at a stoplight. The driver motioned for us to roll down our window, which we did. He then proceeded to tell us that he worked at the hotel and had appreciated having us there during the week. (We assume he saw the Ten Thousand Villages bags in our back window.) We were a bit taken aback but were impressed that he made the effort to speak with us. May we as members of the new Mennonite Church USA continue to make positive impressions on others for the glory of our Lord Jesus.—*Deb Whetzel, Morson, Ont.*

Many question the need for dialogue on issues already processed and official positions already taken. But consider this approach to dialogue: "My readiness to dialogue with you does not necessarily imply my willingness to change my position on the issue, but it absolutely implies my willingness to change my opinion of you." Continued dialogue then does not communicate timidity or uncertainty about issues, but rather it communicates an ongoing commitment to relationship, to community and to the ministry of reconciliation. Dialogue is not a temporary technique to try during short, official periods of discernment on issues, but it is an integral part of the lifestyle of the church. The primary focus of dialogue is the other person, not the issue at hand, not on winning or losing arguments, but on being transformed by the encounter because Jesus is there among you.—*Wendell Schloneger, Beatrice, Neb.*

the Mennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

y readers say

Everett Thomas' description and moving affirmation of Lee Snyder's significant leadership as our first moderator of Mennonite Church USA (editorial, "Thank You, Lee," July 10) was helpful and appreciated by those of us more removed. It gives us a clearer perspective of all that has been done sacrificially to help us through this awesome transformation process. For a relatively small denomination, we are blessed on many levels with competent leadership.—*Clayton Swartzentruber, Lansdale, Pa.*

Curriculum costs

Work has stopped on new Bible school curriculum until additional funding or "other factors that create product viability" are discovered ("Directory, Book Publishing, Bible School Curriculum Among Cuts as MPH Inc. Addresses Financial Woes," June 26). My home congregation, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore., has used "The Bible: Then and Now" series since its inception in 1999. Each year we have been impressed by the quality of the materials and the excitement it generates in children of all ages.

This summer my children attended Bible school at another local church. It gave us a vivid picture of what the future might be like without our own materials. My children enjoyed the other Bible school, but it didn't meet some of my basic expectations. The theme, "Jesus Is Cool!," didn't bring my children to a deeper understanding of our Anabaptist faith. I want my children to grow up with an understanding of our unique theological tradition. In 2000, 241 Bible school curriculum kits were sold. What did other Mennonite congregations use? In the future, will Mennonite curriculum continue to be an option? I would be willing to pay more to ensure its future.—*Cynthia Hockman-Chupp, Canby, Ore.*

Execution questions

I would like to know what the intention is of an article such as "Executed Man's Family Gets MBM Support" (July 3)? To blow our own horns as do-gooders in comforting someone in prison? A way of saying that we reject violence as a solution to a problem? To portray our extensive social justice agenda? When will we see an article that says a Mennonite agency sat with the families of the people who were murdered by a person who demonstrated the complete opposite of what Mennonites believe? When Juan Raul Garza was executed, did anyone minister to those families he changed forever by taking loved ones away from them?

As a family member of a murder victim, I do care about the life of the person who snuffed out the life of my sister-in-law, leaving behind a faithful husband and four children ranging from 8 years old to twins who were 18 months old. I can even forgive that person, especially knowing that, given his heart-wrenching life story, he never had anywhere near the opportunities I enjoyed as a young person. I would even feel grateful if a church agency took that man under its wing, comforted his family and helped him understand the gift of God's grace. What would hurt terribly, however, would be if that agency celebrated the life of my sister-in-law's murderer, but never once tried to comfort the families that had no say in being thrown into this tragedy.

Yes, Garza is a victim, and if one believes the death penalty is wrong, a victim of the ultimate injustice. But remember, he too acted as executioner.—*John Myers, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

> We've got to find a way of stopping this madness. . . . As a church, we've got to wake up. This is not a way to bring peace. This is not a way to bring justice.
>
> *—Dale Bauman, "Executed Man's Family Gets MBM Support," July 3*

So Timothy McVeigh has been executed. Has justice been served? I doubt it. It is impossible to objectively assess the loss and suffering of the victims and relatives of the heinous bombing in Oklahoma City. Having said that, we need to remind ourselves that compared with the bombing during the Gulf War, McVeigh's horrific act was insignificant and minuscule.

We now regard McVeigh as the leading terrorist of our time. He will be remembered as an indiscriminate killer of women and children. In contrast, the American general who masterminded the bombing that killed thousands of civilians in Iraq, including women and children, has been afforded hero status. This irony is deplorable.

I hope and pray that our current Secretary of State will hone his skill as a mediator of international disagreements and be able to withstand the lobbying efforts of the military industrialists who are the ones who profit from war.—*Vernon Gingerich, Hubbard, Ore.*

Giving and receiving

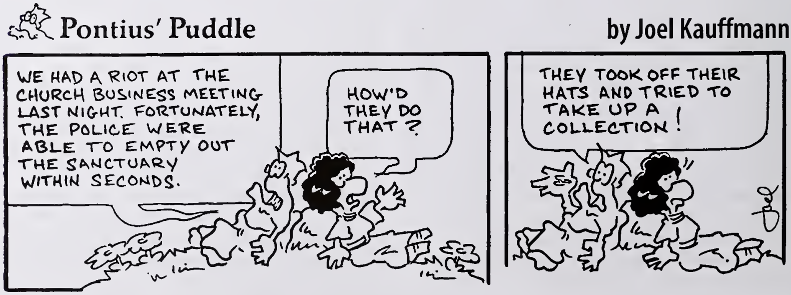
Re income tax rebates: I have a problem with some of the assumptions made in the July 3 editorial and Readers Say. The editorial ("What To Do With $300?") says most Mennonite Church USA members will receive rebates. Paul Sieber writes that "the majority of us have comfortable living without using the refund."

Are there any Mennonites who will not receive a refund because they did not have enough taxable income to pay income tax in 2000? If there are none, have we become the moderately rich and not-so-famous? I hope that who do not have enough taxable income and therefore will not receive a refund. My IRS letter reads, "You will not be receiving a check at this time." I will not have a $300 check to share with anyone.—*Homer E. Yutzy, Wauseon, Ohio*

I well know that most of the tax rebate comes to us at the expense of human services, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Certainly the Pentagon is taking no cuts. I had decided to donate the entire sum, and now I feel I am joined by an entire community of faith. I'm turning over my tax refund to Christian Peacemaker Teams to defend the underprivileged from my country's military. I would love to know what other Christians are doing with their checks.—*Donna L. Williams, Bozeman, Mont.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


WE HAD A RIOT AT THE CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING LAST NIGHT. FORTUNATELY, THE POLICE WERE ABLE TO EMPTY OUT THE SANCTUARY WITHIN SECONDS.
HOW'D THEY DO THAT?
THEY TOOK OFF THEIR HATS AND TRIED TO TAKE UP A COLLECTION!

Short-term mission: protest, problems and empowerment

"Stories of Protest About Short-Term Mission" (Speaking Out, July 3), has generated a flurry of responses, some of which are excerpted here. The article was signed by the leaders of Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas, a district of South Texas congregations in South Central Conference.

Stories similar to what Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas reported about short-term missionaries have sometimes been said about longer-term missionaries as well. There is no room for self-righteousness when it comes to the practice of Christian mission. Training for mission of whatever length—one day or 40 years—needs to deal with such unacceptable behaviors and attitudes reported in this article. As Mennonite Church USA begins to use the term "missional" to describe its character, we need to recognize the complexities of Christian witness and the distortions that occur when we do not follow the manner and way of Christ in mission practice.

Duane Friesen, in his book *Artists, Citizens, Philosophers,* suggests that repentance is integral to mission. The South Texas sisters and brothers point out what happens when a humble and contrite spirit is missing in the practice of mission. Mennonites, if we are true to our best insight, will include in our mission practice a recognition of our complicity in the attitudes of an oppressive society while we strive to become the new society described in Ephesians 2. Such a mission will indeed be a ministry of reconciliation. Only a spirit of repentance and a commitment to reconciliation will help us move beyond these painful experiences in the practice of mission.—*John A. Lapp, Akron, Pa.*

As a Mexican-American who grew up in South Texas, I find it difficult to comprehend the South Texas Mennonite leaders' choice of words and their impression of what the church has or hasn't done for them. I am confused when I read that some of these leaders think that the relationship between them and the larger church has always been one of disempowerment and devalue. I am saddened when the leaders have chosen to discredit the work done by many short-term mission volunteers who have gone with a humble and sincere willingness to listen, learn and walk alongside them. I never once heard the leaders consider South Texas as the whore of the Mennonite church. If they are angry or frustrated because a group of short-term workers didn't clean up, it is the responsibility of all parties to review goals and objectives established for the service group.

While I am no expert on short-term mission, my voluntary service experience (San Antonio, 1988-1990) taught me that I serve not knowing what I will encounter, but I serve because I must listen and learn to walk with those who are oppressed and disenfranchised. This is why I support short-term mission. I challenge the leaders of South Texas to identify their untapped strengths and give themselves value for the hard work they do in their communities, not expecting anything in return but simply living out the messianic call to serve others. —*Gilberto Perez Jr., Aibonito, Puerto Rico*

Last winter my husband and I spent three months in Brownsville, Texas, doing volunteer work. We couldn't speak the language, but I can understand the language of love and appreciation. We were hugged and thanked and given plaques. We left with a feeling of love and appreciation and respect for the people there. This was a very hurtful article, especially since we learned to know and love and worship with the people who signed the article.—*Leanna Peters, Henderson, Neb.*

I am a white Mennonite young person who has participated in several short-term mission trips. I have also heard many reports, both from those engaging in and those hosting short-term mission. My personal experiences, the arrogance I've seen in those who glamorize short-term mission and the horror stories I've heard from victims of these trips have left me quite convinced that short-term mission needs to be seriously re-evaluated, if not scrapped altogether.—*Josiah Groff, Lancaster, Pa.*

Through long, hard experiences, the mission boards have learned to undertake a careful selection process and training for long-term cross-cultural mission. Why have such processes not been put in place for short-term projects? I apologize to Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas for all thoughtless comments and worthless deeds committed by my fellow Mennonites, and I call on our mission boards and all agencies of Mennonite Church USA to promptly institute diversity training workshops.—*Helen Tieszen, Sioux Falls, S.D.*

The frustration expressed by Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas deserves further exploration by the churches and agencies sponsoring service projects. I trust this item will not be overlooked in the attention being given to transformation.—*Ruth Kaufmann, Goshen, Ind.*

I hear our brothers and sisters calling us to end the wounding of our own Mennonite communities through racist practices by discontinuing the exploitation of short-term mission projects. If we are a people who claim to hear the cry of the oppressed, Mennonite Church USA has been given a significant opportunity to listen with open ears and to change its racist practices, even when they come from an honest and sincere intent to serve others and nurture a mission-mindedness within the church. —*Leo Hartshorn, Lancaster, Pa.*

Short-term mission is an enterprise in which the rich, the white, the young and the old come, drain local resources and build a church in the process.

—*Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas, Speaking Out, July 3*

Not by bread alone

A congregation's cookbook includes recipes from church leaders.

Do church leaders cook? Of course they do. But what? The Family Life Committee of Midway Mennonite Church in Columbiana, Ohio, decided to find out.

In 2000, the committee began work on a cookbook. Member Larry Wehr proposed asking leaders from the broader Mennonite church for some of their favorite recipes. The idea caught on, and letters went out to presidents of Mennonite colleges and seminaries, leaders of various Mennonite agencies, conference ministers and others.

Seventeen leaders submitted recipes, which were interspersed with recipes from members of Midway Mennonite Church. The resulting cookbook, called *Seasons and Seasonings*, covers 259 pages, with the recipes organized under these headings: Appetizers, Beverages, Breads, Breakfast Recipes, Soups, Salads, Vegetables, Main Dishes, Desserts, Kids Cooking, Cooking for the Multitudes, International Recipes, Candy and Miscellaneous.

Not everyone sent something. Among those who declined to send recipes were Bob the Tomato and Larry the Cucumber at Big Idea Productions, which does "Veggie Tales."

Once the cookbook was printed, reports church member Becky Wehr, various members of the church helped collate, punch and bind the books. It was distributed to church members in early December 2000.

You can view a few of the recipes here. To order a cookbook, send $12 to Midway Mennonite Church, Family Life Committee, 13376 Columbiana-Canfield Road, Columbiana, OH 44408. Checks should be made out to Midway Mennonite Church Family Life Committee.
—Gordon Houser

Salads

Pear and Pecan Salad

4 cups mixed lettuce
1 medium ripe pear, sliced thin
2 tbsp. feta cheese
2 tbsp. coarsely chopped pecans

Dressing:

3 tbsp. olive oil
1 tbsp. country-style Dijon mustard
1 tbsp. honey
1 tbsp. lemon juice

Arrange pear slices on top of lettuce. Sprinkle with cheese and nuts. Drizzle dressing over the top. (from Eden, the cook on our 25th wedding anniversary trip)
—Everett J. Thomas, editor of The Mennonite

Main dishes

Athena Chicken

1 lb. boneless chicken, cubed
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 large onion (cut in large chunks)
1 15-oz. can stewed tomatoes
6 oz. marinated artichoke hearts
1 tsp. rosemary
1/3 cup of feta cheese

Sauté onions, brown chicken in the oil. Add tomatoes, artichoke marinade, rosemary and simmer. Add artichokes to chicken-tomato mixture and top with feta cheese. Serve over fettuccini or rice. Serves 4-6. (from daughter Judy)

—Lee Snyder, president, Bluffton (Ohio) College

Meatballs With Sauerkraut

Mix in saucepan and simmer for 20 minutes:

1¾ cup ketchup
1 can jellied cranberry sauce
¾ large can sauerkraut, drained
Add a little salt and pepper
1 cup water
½-1 cup sugar

Meatballs:

2 lbs. ground beef or turkey
¼ cup onion soup mix
3 eggs (may leave out yolks, if desired)
1 cup bread crumbs
¼ cup water

Mix and shape into medium size balls. Put some sauce into bottom of large flat baking dish. Place balls in rows and bake at 325 degrees for one hour uncovered. Can be made ahead and reheated. (from Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, Anniversary Cookbook, 1993)

Corel

Desserts

Cherry Pudding Cake

1 cup sugar
3 tbsp. butter
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking soda
½ tsp. salt
1 cup sweet milk
2 cups fresh pitted sour cherries or other fruit

Cream sugar and butter. Add sifted flour, baking soda and salt alternately with sweet milk. Add cherries and stir well. Pour into greased 8x12-inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes. Cut into serving pieces and serve in cereal bowls with lots of cold milk.

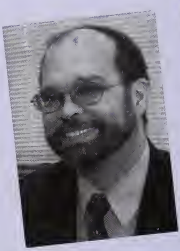
Note: Two cups well-drained canned sour cherries may be used. In this case, use ½ cup juice and ½ cup milk instead of 1 cup milk for the liquid. (You may also substitute other fruit, such as blueberries or crushed pineapple.)

—Shirley H. Showalter, president, Goshen (Ind.) College

South African Milktart

Crust:
1¼ cup flour
3 tbsp. baking powder
pinch of salt
¼ cup sugar
¼ lb. butter
1 egg
¼ cup milk

Combine all ingredients and press into a flat pan.



Filling:
2 eggs, separated
3 cups milk
1 tbsp. mazine-corn flour
4 tbsp. sugar
1 tbsp. flour
1 tbsp. butter
pinch of salt
1 tsp. vanilla

Mix egg yolk and milk together. Add all other ingredients except egg white and bring to boil slowly. Remove from heat and fold in beaten egg whites. Bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes. Sprinkle the top with cinnamon as soon as it comes out of the oven. Enjoy with a good cup of tea.

—Stanley W. Green, executive director, Mennonite Mission Network

You know you're in trouble when the preacher says …

by Ryan Ahlgrim and Randall Roth

"Because of the importance of today's topic, time will not be a factor."

"I preached this sermon two years ago, but you probably won't remember it."

"The deep theological truths that can be gleaned from the genealogies in 1 Chronicles are endless, as you will discover in this four-week series."

"I couldn't find a Scripture to support what I'm saying, but I did find this quote in *Reader's Digest*. …"

"While I'm on vacation for the next three Sundays, I've arranged for Gideon speakers."

"The New Age movement is not as dangerous as you may have heard. Take this crystal I'm wearing. …"

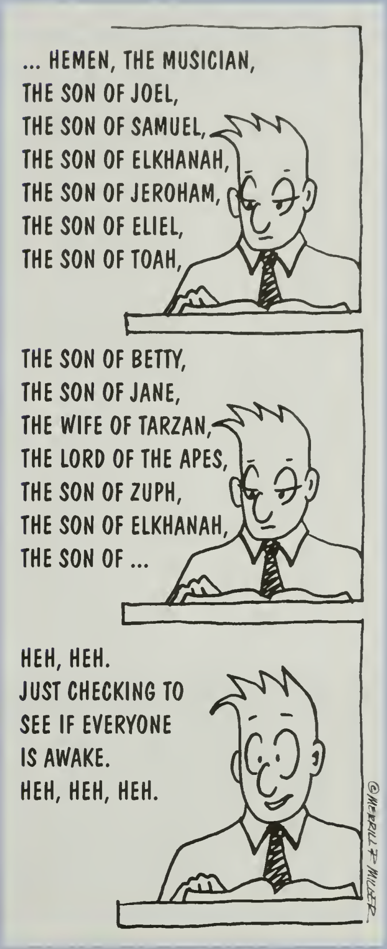
"I've never really been comfortable with my gender."

"The Sermon on the Mount is best interpreted as stand-up comedy."

"Knowing her as I do, I'm sure the church moderator won't mind my telling you about her drinking problem."

"I didn't have time this week to prepare my sermon, so I'm going to let the Spirit lead me."

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis. Randall Roth is pastor of Des Moines (Iowa) Mennonite Church.


… HEMEN, THE MUSICIAN, THE SON OF JOEL, THE SON OF SAMUEL, THE SON OF ELKHANAH, THE SON OF JEROHAM, THE SON OF ELIEL, THE SON OF TOAH,
THE SON OF BETTY, THE SON OF JANE, THE WIFE OF TARZAN, THE LORD OF THE APES, THE SON OF ZUPH, THE SON OF ELKHANAH, THE SON OF …
HEH, HEH. JUST CHECKING TO SEE IF EVERYONE IS AWAKE. HEH, HEH, HEH.
©MERRILL R MILLER

Heard on a church answering machine:

by Margaret Brouillette

Good day, you have reached the office of Pastor ____________.
If you wish to critique last Sunday's sermon, press 1.
To share your evaluation of the pastor's spouse and/or kids, press 2.
For any negative comments concerning the music, press 3.
To disagree with a decision of the board, press 4.
To criticize your children's Sunday school teacher/program, press 5.
To complain about the youth group, press 6.
To ask for money, press 7.
To report on the suspicious activities of somebody else in the congregation, press 8.
To talk behind my back, press 9. Your call will be transferred to Mr. ________, who does an excellent job of conveying your message to all those who aren't concerned, in a very short period of time.
If you wish to say a word of encouragement, hold the line. I'll be right with you.

Margaret Brouillette is a free-lance writer from Saint Luc, Quebec.

Peacemakers celebrate riot that wasn't

Mennonites join initiative to prevent trouble in Pa. city

STATE COLLEGE, Pa.—As riots have become all too common, from Seattle to Genoa, Italy, the best news out of central Pennsylvania this summer may have been the riot that never happened.

> **Our goal was rooted in the prophetic call to seek the peace of the city.**
>
> —*David B. Miller*

In 1998 and 2000, State College's annual Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts was marred by rioting. This past March, another riot occurred following the loss of Penn State's men's basketball team in the postseason playoffs. The community was further shaken this spring by the eruption of racial tensions, culminating in a death threat directed at the president of the Black Student Caucus.

So concerns were high for this summer's art festival, held on July 14. The city called in more than 200 state police, with a horse-mounted brigade, to supplement local law enforcement. But other methods of peacekeeping came into play.

Beginning in January, University Mennonite Church pastor David B. Miller and other local clergy met together and with city police to explore how the religious community could help prevent rioting at the Arts Fest. "Our goal was rooted in the prophetic call to seek the peace of the city," Miller says.

One initiative was the 33-member Peace Team, including 11 members of University Mennonite Church. They recognized that they were not prepared—nor would they be welcomed by the police—to calm a riot in progress. "We decided to focus on preventing violence by setting a peaceful tone among a crowd anticipated to number in the thousands, a good percentage of whom would be intoxicated," Miller says.

At the festival, pairs of Peace Team volunteers walked the streets from 10:30 Saturday night until 3:30 Sunday morning, wearing baby-blue T-shirts and handing out 2,500 donated daisies. Starting with the city's bartenders and tavern staff, team members "deputized" more than 1,500 people by having them "swear in" with the statement, "For this night, I commit myself to seek the peace of the city, look out for the welfare of others and to refrain from any behavior that could injure another or destroy property."

Many deputies recruited additional peacemakers. The Peace Team also proved to be popular with festival revelers.

"There were periodic cheers—'We love the Peace Team!'—from supportive, albeit often drunken, well-wishers," Miller says. "More frequently there were simple expressions of thanks for our presence on the streets."

The night passed without major incident. Some community members credited the overwhelming number of police. But some festival-goers experienced the police presence as threatening and antagonistic, Miller notes, and they say that without the presence of the Peace Team and other volunteers, violent confrontation likely would have occurred.

Miller was gratified to receive a letter of commendation from the borough council and police. "What I appreciate most is the growing recognition that the Peace Team's approach was an effective approach," he says.

The Peace Team has been asked to be on the streets following the Penn State-University of Miami football game on Sept. 1. "This will be a national spotlight event," Miller says, "and fears of another riot are on everyone's mind."

—*Cathleen Hockman-Wert and David B. Miller*

Report from the street: armed with daisies

Ken Nafziger, a member of University Mennonite Church in State College, Pa., was a member of the Peace Team organized in anticipation of violence at the city's Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts on July 14. This was an incident that happened that night.

It was about 2:15 a.m., just after the bars had closed, and our four-person Peace Team cluster was at the corner of Locust and Beaver. It was getting rather crowded, and a police officer decided to clear the sidewalk area to avoid congestion.

When he approached a particular young man who was talking to a friend, the young man asked why he had to leave since he was not causing any problems. The policeman reiterated his order to leave, at which the young man asked to see his badge number. The officer said that his name was clearly visible on his badge, but he wanted to be clear that if the young man failed to disperse, he would be arrested for failing to obey an order.

I could see that the situation was growing tenser, so I stepped beside the young man and got his attention by offering him a daisy, saying that I was from the Peace Team and that I did not want to see him get into trouble. He replied that he did not want trouble but did not want to be part of a fascist state.

I turned to his friend: Could he take his buddy home so he would not get into trouble? The friend put his arm around the young man's shoulder and asked him to leave. As they turned to go, the young man told me he had nothing against me being there, but he did not like the attitude of the police. The two friends then left, both carrying flowers.

MCC photo by J. Stanley Friesen

Angelina Magaga (left) shows Mennonite Central Committee worker Delores Friesen crafts made by AIDS hospice patients. Magaga works at the Light and Courage Center in Francistown, Botswana, which provides knitting, gardening and other activities for 30 AIDS patients. Friesen and her husband, Stan, recently concluded an MCC trip to Africa to explore responses to the HIV-AIDS pandemic there.

African AIDS crisis a 'pastoral challenge'

After 10-nation trip, workers to recommend MCC response

AKRON, Pa.—With AIDS and HIV sweeping across the continent, sub-Saharan Africa is mired in an overwhelming health crisis. More than 25 million people are HIV positive, and 2.5 million people there have died from AIDS.

But this health crisis is also a moral, ethical and socioeconomic crisis, say Delores and Stan Friesen, who recently returned from visiting 10 African countries on an AIDS information gathering trip for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Loss of income, coupled with medical and funeral expenses, destroys family and community resources for the future. Like their counterparts in North America, many African churches find it hard to respond to the crisis, partly because frank discussions of sexual issues are difficult.

But African churches are also the strongest source of hope, say the Friesens. The church's structure, resources and ability to work across generations give it a unique power to help those in need. "Many people are finding a new kind of wholeness within the life of the church though they have the disease," Delores says.

The Friesens will make recommendations to MCC for its long-term response to the crisis.

Stan notes the difference between the AIDS crisis and the January earthquake in Gujarat, India, which MCC is also responding to. "This earthquake [AIDS] will be rumbling for years," he says. "The challenge for the church will be responding with endurance, compassion and vision for the long haul."

AIDS has forced churches in Africa to deal with theological issues of sexuality, death and suffering. AIDS takes the strongest and most productive people first, Delores says, those of working and childbearing years, ages 15 to 40. Older people and children are left with farming and other work, and grandparents often have to take care of orphaned children.

The Friesens believe MCC and mission boards can work together to respond. Church leaders and church partners in Africa are asking for training for counseling on bereavement, shame, reconciliation and forgiveness. "This is a tremendous pastoral challenge," Stan says.

Individuals and churches elsewhere can also contribute. The economic effects of AIDS mean more and more children are receiving no education. If every family in a church made a long-term commitment to contribute to a child's education through sponsorship programs such as MCC's Global Family Program, Delores says, the overall effect would be great.

African churches are responding simply yet effectively. In one area, congregations help AIDS sufferers plant two fruit trees, which will provide food, underscore the importance of good nutrition, show care and also provide for the patient's family after death. In another congregation, every member brings a cup of any food staple—salt, rice, oil—for the hungry.

Delores is a professor of pastoral counseling at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., and a licensed therapist specializing in grief, sexuality, and marriage and family issues. Stan is a pastor and director of theological education at Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries. The Friesens previously spent 13 years in Ghana and Nigeria with Mennonite Board of Missions.—*Ardell Stauffer for MCC News Service*

Hope a challenge amid AIDS pandemic

No matter what their official assignments are, all 14 Mennonite Ministries workers in Botswana deal with the effect of HIV and AIDS. All of them know people who have died, who have been orphaned, who are infected.

"We have to redefine hope in the face of the HIV-AIDS pandemic in Botswana and Southern Africa," says Sandra Franklin,who serves with Mennonite Ministries, a joint program of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee. "In this context, hope is making it possible for [people] to die in peace and dignity."

Art and Ruth Thiessen work with the Botswana Christian AIDS Intervention Program. Ruth admits difficulty in finding hope amid the effects of the disease. But it can be found.

"I find hope in the fact that the church is beginning to respond, even if not as well or as widely as it should," she says. "The church is opening its ears to the real story."—*GCMC News Service*

Mongolian worker hopes for tree-top experiences in developing lumber supply and faith witness

ELKHART, Ind.—Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree to find the Lord. Drew Robinson hopes trees can also help Mongolians discover the Christian faith.

Robinson, a Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker, and his family returned to Mongolia in June, a month after he finished his master's degree in resource conservation at the University of Montana in Missoula. Now he wants to put that degree to use by helping develop a sustainable lumber supply, which could mean more jobs.

"We're praying that God will prepare their hearts and our hearts for what should be done," Robinson says.

He first went to Mongolia in 1992, then went back in 1995, this time with MBM. He worked with a factory that made "gers," the traditional Mongolian houses, and has since added furniture to its line of products.

"I was able to live there, see the needs and formulate a project around those needs," says Robinson, who has brought to the factory portable sawmills and solar kilns. Two Mongolian carpenters have traveled to Ohio to learn new furniture-making techniques.

One of the greatest challenges is to find lumber for production, Robinson says. Only 8 or 9 percent of the country's land is forested. In Mongolia's cold and dry desert, it can take more than 100 years for tree regrowth.

A system of timber inventory would help determine how much of the forest can be cut and still be sustainable. Robinson also hopes to start a seedling nursery. With every tree that is cut, a new one will be planted to replace it.

Robinson says the Mongolians have an inherent culture of respect for and ownership for the land and its natural resources. The country has good laws supporting conservation, but he says they are rarely enforced. Robinson is hoping for government support for reforestation and management.

While he introduces new ideas to his Mongolian co-workers, Robinson has learned endurance and perseverance from them. He recalls a time when local government officials offered them lumber. When they arrived at the location, they discovered wood stockpiled as whole felled trees. The men had only crosscut saws, which are difficult to use on a whole log. Robinson had an old chain saw. They worked all day cutting and loading logs onto an old truck. They did not have water or food. Yet, as they worked, Robinson says, "the men from the factory were singing."

MBM photo

Mary Ellen and Drew Robinson and their children (from left): Sophie, 18 months old; Caleb, 3 years old; and Leah, 7 months old.

He says his faith is what guides him as he lives and works alongside the people. "We feel that it is important to be a witness as well as share the good news," he says. "People are more responsive when they know you and have a chance to observe your life. Christ must be a part of all that I do, in every aspect of my life. Being a witness can be demonstrated in the way that we do business, as we treat others, as we would like them to treat us."

When Robinson first moved to his current location, he shared evening meals with a Mongolian family. They eventually began to ask more and more questions about his faith. The father of the family, Yademjav, became ill and had numerous heart attacks, prompting the family to question what they believed.

"One evening, his health worsened, and my Mongolian mother and sister and I went with him to the hospital," Robinson says. "I wanted to share with him the provision that Jesus had made for us on the cross.

"When I was done, I was surprised to hear Mother say, 'Did you understand that, Yademjav?' and then she proceeded to tell it to him again much better then I was able to."

Yademjav soon died, and Robinson was able to participate in the funeral.

"It was during this hardship that my sister surrendered her life to Christ, and Mother at least began to consider it very seriously," he says. "By living with them and being there when the Lord orchestrated the circumstances of our lives, he prepared the soil of their hearts for his word."—*Chris Serio Martin for MBM News Service*

Asia workers hold first gathering

Growing cooperation among Mennonite workers in Southeast Asia took another step forward in June with the first inter-agency retreat.

Seventy-nine adults and 14 children—serving with the Commission on Overseas Mission-Mennonite Board of Missions, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Brethren Mission and Service International—attended the retreat, held June 26-29 in Cha-am, Thailand. They came from Cambodia, China, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

Also participating were staff from agency headquarters in the United States and Mennonites serving in the region with other agencies.

Elmer Martens, professor emeritus of Old Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif., led Bible study. Six volunteers from Pennsylvania came to provide child care.—*MBMSI News Service*

Canada delegates OK new structure

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Mennonite Church Canada was created in 1999. It was re-created last month at the denomination's second annual delegate assembly.

In a unanimous expression of support, delegates at Abbotsford 2001, July 11-14, accepted plans for a new structure for Mennonite Church Canada. Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada have now enacted measures to take over the current binational ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Long-standing agencies such as the GC commissions on Education, Home Ministries and Overseas Mission and the MC boards of Congregational Ministries, Education and Missions, as well as current Canadian commissions, will cease to exist.

In Canada, that work will be divided under two oversight bodies: Christian Formation Council and Christian Witness Council, each with 10 elected members. A Support Services Council, with six elected members, will provide the infrastructure to support the other two councils.

Justina Heese was named executive secretary for Christian Formation, Jack Suderman executive secretary for Christian Witness and Pam Peters-Priese executive secretary for Support Services. Heese, executive secretary for Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Commission, and Suderman, executive secretary of the Ministries Commission, started their new roles on July 15. Peters-Priese, stewardship consultant for Mennonite Foundation in Canada, will begin in September.

Canadian giving supported one-fourth of the 120 binational denominational staff located in the United States, in addition to the 35 full-time equivalent staff in Canada. Under the restructuring, Mennonite Church Canada will provide the same services, as well as some new programming, with a full-time equivalent of 59 staff in Canada, some of which may be dispersed among area conferences.

The Christian Witness Council will cooperate with Mennonite Church USA's new Mennonite Mission Network to take over the work of the Commission on Overseas Mission, Commission on Home Ministries, Mennonite Board of Missions and Canada's Ministries Commission. No mission projects or workers are being terminated as a result of the restructuring. Canada will assume responsibility for Canadian overseas workers. Because Canada has 42 percent of the workers but only 25 percent of the constituency that supports this work, Canada will receive transfer payments from Mennonite Church USA.—*Canadian Mennonite*

GCMC photo by Mary Franz

Picture preservation

Hopi historian and guide Lance Polingyouma points to stone carvings hundreds of years old during a tour of Dawa Park, near Hopi Mission School in Kykotsmovi, Ariz. The tour was part of the school's 50th anniversary celebration July 20-22. Started in 1951 by the General Conference Mennonite Church, the school is supported by the Commission on Home Ministries through its Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, by Mennonite Voluntary Service and also by the American Baptist Churches. The weekend featured historical presentations, reminiscences, craft displays and demonstrations. The celebration concluded with a Sunday worship service at Kykotsmovi Mennonite Church, which included a hymnsing with songs in both Hopi and English. Over the years, Mennonites and American Baptists have collected more than 2 million Campbell Soup labels to benefit the school.

Corrections: David Habegger and J. Herbert and Helen Fretz have attended a combined 68 General Conference Mennonite Church delegate assemblies since 1941. That number was incorrect in the July 17 issue. Habegger and J. Herbert Fretz have attended every GC assembly in the last 60 years, while Helen Fretz missed one.

Kenneth Thompson, pastor of Friendship Community Church, Bronx, N.Y., addressed the African-American Mennonite Association meeting during Nashville 2001. He was misidentified in a photo caption in the July 17 issue.

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this date in Mennonite history

Aug. 7, 1960—Mennonite Camping Association is organized.

Fourth CPT member starts Vieques sentence

CHICAGO—As two members of a Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) delegation conclude their sentences for trespassing on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, the last member of the group has started his.

Mark Byler of Goshen, Ind., on July 23 began 20 nights in a Fort Wayne, Ind., work release facility and 100 hours of community service. Meanwhile, Brian Ladd of Boulder, Colo., on July 30 completed a similar sentence, and Rich Williams of West New York, N.J., was released July 25 after serving 30 days in a Puerto Rico prison.

The three, plus fellow CPT delegation member H.A. Penner, were found guilty of trespassing after entering the U.S. Navy facility on Vieques on May 2 to protest bombing maneuvers on the island. Penner completed a 20-day prison sentence on July 13.

Seminary sets record for contributions

ELKHART, Ind.—Thanks to estate gifts, contributions to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart for the 2000-2001 fiscal year reached an all-time high.

AMBS received nearly $2.4 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, slightly exceeding the previous record set in 1995-96 and 15 percent higher than last year. Estate gifts totaled $878,000. Estate gifts are part of the restricted giving category, which topped $905,000 for 2000-2001. But giving to the annual fund was about $1.5 million, down slightly from last year.

"Broad financial support and moral support are the seminary's greatest assets," says AMBS president Nelson Kraybill. "With much structural change in the denomination, AMBS remains well grounded for leadership training in Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada."

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Conrad Grebel College becomes a university

WATERLOO, Ont.—Conrad Grebel, the Mennonite institute of higher learning in Waterloo, Ont., is no longer a college. It is now a university, following provincial government approval on June 29. Conrad Grebel College will now be called Conrad Grebel University College.

School officials cited several reasons for the name change: By offering both undergraduate and graduate programs, Conrad Grebel was functioning as a university, and the word "college" often suggests a community college or a collegiate (high) school.

"We thought our name should state more clearly who we are," says president John E. Toews.

New program exposes students to service

GOSHEN, Ind.—Instead of earning money or even exploring pastoral ministry, six Goshen (Ind.) College students are spending the summer learning about service. They served under Goshen's new Service Inquiry Program, funded by the Lilly Endowment.

Three students are serving with Mennonite Voluntary Service: Andrew Burkhalter, senior from Goshen, in Seattle; Rachel Koontz, junior from Elkhart, Ind., in Pilsen, Ill.; and Elizabeth Anne Miller, senior from Scottdale, Pa., in Harlingen, Texas. J. Landon Yoder, freshman from Goshen, is working with another Mennonite-related ministry, DOOR in Denver. Rachel Ruark, junior from Harrisonburg, Va., is serving with the Catholic Worker movement in Houston, while Sarah Shirk, sophomore from Conestoga, Pa., is with Jubilee Partners in Comer, Ga.

Insurance company observes 75th anniversary

NEW HOLLAND, Pa.—About 270 people attended the 75th anniversary celebration of Goodville Mutual Casualty Company in New Holland on June 22. Activities included a picnic, group games and historical tours. Among the sites were Goodville, the town where the company was started in 1926, and the Weaverland area, where local Mennonites formed the charter group that was incorporated as Goodville two years later.

Events

Get on the Road, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, at Amigo Centre, Sturgis, Mich. For high school sophomores, juniors and seniors seeking to end racism. Contact Amigo Centre at 616-651-2811; <info@amigocentre.org>.

Workers

Gerber, Rachel S., concluded July 8 as youth pastor at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Martin, Steven R., Middlebury, Ind., will begin Aug. 1 as senior vice president of marketing at Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Richard, Gary, was ordained April 22 as pastor at Mennonite Church of Warsaw (Ind.).

Ross, Richard, concluded a pastorate May 31 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Births

Benner, Brittany Joy, June 21, to Amy (Heck) and Loren Benner, Lancaster, Pa.

Brubaker, Reagan Keller, June 21, to Brenton and Kathy (Keller) Brubaker, Lancaster, Pa.

Couch, Donal Joseph Lee and Ronan Edward Lee (twins), May 14, to Fergus and Vicki (Unruh) Couch, Rochester, Minn.

Egli, John Blake, June 16, to J.J. and Stacey L. (Mast) Egli, Topeka, Ind.

Ewert, Delica Rose, July 16, to Tiffani Ewert, Wichita, Kan.

Fellenbaum, Malia Nichole, June 18, received for adoption June 20 by Heidi (Leaman) and Rodney Fellenbaum, Hershey, Pa.

Goertzen, Heather Christine, June 25, to Brad and Ruth Goertzen, Goshen, Ind.

Gusler, Sadie Jane, June 27, to Jay and Nicole (Clymer) Gusler, Sumner, Wash.

Harshbarger, Koby James, July 15, to Chad and Denise (Beyeler) Harshbarger, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Hess, Tucker Paul, June 7, to Donna (Frey) and Jay Hess, Chambersburg, Pa.

Horst, Sarah Nicole, June 10, to Daryl and Lisa (French) Horst, Lancaster, Pa.

Janzen, Grace Olivia, July 18, to Alan and Kim (Goebel) Janzen, Henderson, Neb.

Johnson, Grant McCoy, May 18, to Nita Gerig and Tim Johnson, New Carlisle, Ind.

Kaufman, Cade Andrew Parke, June 29, to Laura Parke (Reitz) and Darin Kaufman, Olathe, Kan.

King, Benjamin David, July 5, to Ann (Pellman) and Rick King, Harrisonburg, Va.

King, Jonah Donavin, May 27, to Darvis and Shelly (Nester) King, Grove City, Pa.

Lehman, Owen Kyle, June 6, to Crystal and Gerald Lehman, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Lynch, Tobias Monroe, June 28, to Dan and Ila (Waltner) Lynch, Tyngsborough, Mass.

Markus, Jackson Isaiah, July 6, to Amy (Brubaker) and Jerry Markus, Toano, Va.

Martin, Kathleen (Katie) Emily, July 6, to Brent and Sue (Gingerich) Martin, New Hamburg, Ont.

Martin, Luca Paul, July 4, to Donna (Martin) and Jason Martin, Elmira, Ont., and Bari, Italy.

Martin, Tristen James, July 16, to Doug and Lydia (Ramos) Martin, Leola, Pa.

Miller, Beau Alexander, June 29, to Brian and Wendy (Waltner) Miller, Hurley, S.D.

Mowery, Luke Wachter, July 8, to Debbi (Wachter) and J.P. Mowery, Harrisonburg, Va.

Murch, Rebecca Madeline, July 11, to Jennifer (Kurtz) and Jon Murch, Harrisonburg, Va.

Myers, Colton Edward, July 2, to Gwen and Robert Myers, Congerville, Ill.

Pauls, Rachel Kaye, June 28, to Linda (Wiens) and Steve Pauls, Nicholasville, Ky.

Riddle, Adam Christopher, July 12, to Chris and Melody Riddle, Harrisonburg, Va.

Romack, Renee Cordelia, June 17, to Andrea (Egli) and Dustin Romack, Muncie, Ind.

Schmucker, Shanae Alysa, July 29, 2000, received for adoption June 2001 by Karen and Kelly Schmucker, Abbyville, Kan.

Schumm, Julia Madeline, July 11, to Jennifer (Found) and Wendell Schumm, Mitchell, Ont.

Voth, Rachel Anne, July 20, to Beth Anne (Scobbie) and Donley Voth, Grand Blanc, Mich.

Wade, Samuel Paul, June 28, to Carmen (Schmidt) and Paul Wade, Wichita, Kan.

Wedel, Max Daniel, June 14, to Tanya (Reece) and Tom Wedel, Hesston, Kan.

Yoder, Abigail Delaine, June 27, to Carolyn and Victor Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Zook, Benjamin Elisha, July 13, to Jill and Tony Zook, Landenburg, Pa.

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Marriages

Aeschliman/Liechty: Kevin Aeschliman, Wauseon, Ohio, and Kristy Liechty, Archbold, Ohio, July 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Ainsworth/Mohr: Sarah Ainsworth, Blair, Ont., and Tony Mohr, Elmira, Ont., July 14 at Blair.

Allen/King: Tim Allen, Mishawaka, Ind., and Kimberly King, Mishawaka, June 16 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Armbrister/Welty: Heather Armbrister, Wichita, Kan., and Mike Welty, Wichita, July 7 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita.

Bachle/Eberly: Markus Bachle, Switzerland, and Daina Eberly, Lititz, Pa., June 30.

Bixler/Gehman: Benjamin Bixler, York Springs, Pa., and Sarah Gehman, Parkesburg, Pa., May 26 at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School.

Blosser/Shantz: Lindsey Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va., and Timothy Shantz, Harrisonburg, June 23 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Bowman/Sauder: Jennifer Bowman, Harrisonburg, Va., and Matthew Sauder, Akron, Pa., July 14 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Clemmer/Steury: Nate Clemmer, Souderton, Pa., and Brook Steury, Goshen, Ind., June 16 at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Cummins/Garber: Buffy Cummins, Goshen, Ind., and Jeremy Garber, Goshen, July 14.

Delagrange/Ulrich: Darren Delagrange, Roanoke, Ill., and Sondra Ulrich, Eureka, Ill., July 14 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Dutton/Nagel: Ryan Dutton, Uniontown, Ohio, and Laurie Nagel, Uniontown, June 30 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Eash/Gingerich: Alma Eash, Goshen, Ind., and Ike Gingerich, New Paris, Ind., June 2 at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Erb/Stoudt: Ann T. Erb, Souderton, Pa., and Curtis A. Stoudt, Telford, Pa., July 13 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Fix/Rice: Karen Fix, Greensboro, N.C., and Daniel Rice, Greensboro, June 2 at Hagerstown, Md.

Friesen/Hiebner: Jennifer Friesen, Lincoln, Neb., and Charles Hiebner, Henderson, Neb., July 21 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Gingerich/Ropp: Aaron Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa, and Jolene Ropp, Kalona, July 14 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Haddon/Weaver: Chuck Haddon, Willow Street, Pa., and Suzanne Weaver, Lancaster, Pa., June 16 at James Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Heatwole/Kauffman: Christy Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va., and Ryan Kauffman, Lancaster, Pa., June 30.

Hunsberger/Jantzi: Kyle Hunsberger, Telford, Pa., and Tina Jantzi, Waterloo, Ont., July 14 at Waterloo.

Kaufmann/Solomon: Austin Kaufmann, Goshen, Ind., and Victoria Solomon, Canal Fulton, Ohio, June 30.

Leininger/Short: Nick Leininger, Pettisville, Ohio, and Ruby Short, Archbold, Ohio, July 7 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Maust/Vermilion: Traci Maust and Chris Vermilion, July 21 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Mitchell/Zook: Janice Mitchell, Appleton, Wis., and Jereme Zook, Pretty Prairie, Kan., May 26 at Peace United Church of Christ, Jerseyville, Ill.

Morgan/Rounds: Jill Morgan, Grantsville, Md., and Ron Rounds, Accident, Md., July 14 at Pleasant Valley Park, Bittinger, Md.

Sieber/Steider: Amy Sieber, Champaign, Ill., and Jason Steider, West Liberty, Ohio, June 23 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Deaths

Alderfer, Daniel L., 45, Athens, Pa., died June 25 from a farm accident. Spouse: Glenna Moore Alderfer. Parents: Margaret Landes (deceased) and Durrell Alderfer. Other survivors: children Carrie, James, Gina. Funerals: June 28 at North Rome Wesleyan Church, Athens, Pa.; June 29 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Baer, Curtis, 76, Moorefield, Ont., died June 9 of a heart attack. Spouse: Pauline Baer. Parents: Ezra and Elizabeth Good Baer (deceased). Other survivors: son David; one grandchild. Funeral: June 12 at Community Mennonite Fellowship, Drayton, Ont.

Bertsche, Mary M. Kelley, 91, Bluffton, Ohio, died June 23. Spouse: Orville J. Bertsche (deceased). Parents: Beatrice and George Kelley (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Anne Moser, David, Jerry, Joe, Robert; 15 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Bixler, David W., 75, Goshen, Ind., died July 7. Spouse: Marjorie Atwater Bixler. Parents: A. Dale and Celesta Smucker Bixler (deceased). Other survivors: children Patricia, Barbara Bixler Lamb, Joyce, Alan, Donald; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

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SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL (October 26 - November 8)

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AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 8-28)
HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
JORDAN, ISRAEL, VIENNA and BUDAPEST (February 15-28)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL/PALESTINE (April 5-18)
PARAGUAY, BOLIVIA and PERU (April 6-22)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA and Its FJORDS (June 17 - July 1)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 19 - July 1)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 12-29)
MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)
EASTERN CANADA (August 2-12)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (August 12-26)
SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)
VIETNAM (November 8-25)

2003 TOURS
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE in AFRICA (August)

Christner, Levi, 70, Goshen, Ind., died July 22 of a stroke. Spouse: Martha Christner.

Detweiler, Gerald B., 69, Secor, Ill., died July 15. Spouse: (1st) Dorothy Chambers Detweiler (deceased); (2nd) Sally Conley Detweiler. Parents: John and Laura Schertz Detweiler (deceased). Other survivors: children Alan, Linda Javor, Michael, Eric; eight grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka, Ill.

Ediger, Betty Regehr, 79, Hesston, Kan., died July 9. Spouse: Sam Ediger. Parents: George and Mary Pauls Regehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Bruce, Darrell, David, Bette Jo Lehrman; 13 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 12 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Farrell, Carol Ann Thorp, 67, Syracuse, Ind., died July 12 of liver problems. Spouse: Joseph Farrell. Parents: Cecil and Opal Trual Thorp (deceased). Other survivors: children Luann Yoder, Kristin, Andrew Oexmann; stepchildren Tim, Greg; seven grandchildren. Funeral: July 15 at Yoder-Culp Funeral Home, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Evalyn, 95, Kalona, Iowa, died July 7. Parents: John and Josephine Graber (deceased). Funeral: July 10 at Washington (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Hershberger, John Melvin, 90, Canby, Ore., died June 26. Spouse: Etta Kropf Hershberger. Parents: Jacob J. and Melinda Kramer Hershberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Warde, James, Keith; seven grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 29 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Hess, Ella Good, 87, Lancaster, Pa., died July 2. Spouse: Mervin M. Hess (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Anna Kreider Good (deceased). Survivors: children Erma Brunk, Mervin, Daniel, J. Harold, Kenneth; 15 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 5 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Horst, Elvin M., 69, Manheim, Pa., died June 30. Spouse: Arlene R. Shenk Horst. Parents: Paul and Eva Martin Horst (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Andrea Stoltzfus. Funeral: July 5 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hostetter, A. Clyde, 93, Lititz, Pa., died June 22. Spouse: (1st) Lillian McMichael Hostetter (deceased), (2nd) Edna G. Brubaker Hostetter. Parents: Joseph and Katie Andrews Hostetter (deceased). Other survivors: children J. Paul, Robert; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 26 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz.

Koehn, Bryson, 78, Medford, Okla., died July 4 of a cerebral hemorrhage. Spouse: Nathalie B. Decker Koehn. Parents: Adam and Esther Unruh Koehn (deceased). Other survivors: children Dwight, Sandra Foraker, Byron; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: July 9 at Deer Creek (Okla.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, Marion M., 73, St. Joe, Ind., died June 30 of a stroke. Spouse: Alva Miller. Parents: Amos and Sarah Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Kerry, Ken, Randy, Annette Chandler, Shawn; 14 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 3 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind.

Miller, Maynard G., 73, Salisbury, Pa., died July 2. Parents: Aaron and Alta Yoder Miller (deceased). Funeral: July 5 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, Rachel M., 95, Goshen, Ind., died July 14. Spouse: Samuel S. Miller (deceased). Parents: Josiah and Magdalena Yoder Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Wayne, Willowdean Schleining, Jeannie Schrock, Winifred Lehman, Sharon Koelzer, Karon Weaver; 19 grandchildren; 38 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Myer, Eleanor Wenger, 85, Lititz, Pa., died June 27. Spouse: Amos B. Myer (deceased). Parents: Phares C. and Nora Cassel Wenger (deceased). Survivors: children John, Amos, Lois Bucher, Rachel Miller, Jean Landis; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 30 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz.

Niswander, Glenn, 90, Chambersburg, Pa., died June 22. Spouse: Orlena Niswander (deceased). Parents: Albert and Alta Niswander (deceased). Funeral: June 26 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Nofziger, Lena Elizabeth Mullet, 87, Roseburg, Ore., died July 5. Spouse: Virgil Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Jacob J. and Elizabeth Kauffman Mullet (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Proven, Carol Miller, Doug; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 9 at Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Peters, Sara, 91, Steinbach, Man., died June 25. Funeral: June 7 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Preheim, Gladys Waltner, 83, Freeman, S.D., died July 8. Spouse: Leonard Preheim (deceased). Parents: John P. and Anna Schrag Waltner (deceased). Survivors: children Dwight, Randall; one grandchild. Memorial service: July 9 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Preheim, Leonard, 81, Freeman, S.D., died July 6. Spouse: Gladys Preheim (deceased). Parents: Jonath and Ida Graber Preheim (deceased). Survivors: children Dwight, Randall; one grandchild. Memorial service: July 9 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Ruby, Andrew, 86, Tavistock, Ont., died June 17. Funeral: June 20 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Schmidt, Walter H., 91, Goessel, Kan., died July 17. Spouse: Hildred Schmidt (deceased). Survivors: daughter Drucilla Hall; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Schwenk, Eleanor M., 62, Souderton, Pa., died June 30 of a cerebral hemorrhage. Spouse: Homer J. Schwenk. Parents: Abram and Ruth Moyer Derstine (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Bryan, Nancy, Kendra Lutz; seven grandchildren. Funeral service: July 5 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Showalter, Anna R., 94, Stuarts Draft, Va., died July 5. Parents: Amos and Lillie Showalter (deceased). Funeral: July 9 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Stuckey, Florence Guth, 96, Deer Creek, Ill., died July 12. Spouse: Earl Stuckey (deceased). Parents: Peter and Bertha Naffziger Guth (deceased). Survivors: children Edith Lehman, Ann Stacy, Sandra Risser, Paul, Keith; 16 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 16 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Troyer, Larry M., 62, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died July 2 of a stroke. Parents: Roy and Opal Miller Troyer (deceased). Funeral: July 6 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Ted R., 79, Harper, Kan., died July 12 in a farm accident. Spouse: Violet Eicher Troyer. Parents: Fred and Bertha Schindler Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Rod, Rita Smoker; four grandchildren. Funeral: July 16 at Crystal Springs Mennonite Church, Harper.

Weaver, Katie Grove, 91, Waynesboro, Va., died July 6. Spouse: Franklin Earl Weaver (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Emma Grove (deceased). Survivors: children Marion, Oliver, Alice Soppe, Dwight, Daniel, Maggie Brenneman, Orpha Beyeler; 20 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 10 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

Wenger, Lawrence R., 79, Montezuma, Ga., died July 10. Spouse: Agnes Stutzman Wenger. Parents: Noah and Anna Ramer Wenger (deceased). Other survivors: children Marilyn Watson, Linda Yoder, Judy, Stanley; foster son Joe Foster; nine grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Yoder, C. Harold, 96, Goshen, Ind., died July 13. Spouse: N. Louise Yoder (deceased). Parents: Frank and Anna Raber Yoder (deceased). Survivors: daughter Mary Sue Miller; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 16 at the Meeting House at Greencroft, Goshen.

Yoder, Florence Schrock, 95, died July 7. Spouse: Christy P. Yoder (deceased). Parents: David and Susanna Diener Schrock (deceased). Survivors: children Evelyn Zook, Leroy, Joe; 13 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 10 at Clearfork Cemetery, Garden City, Mo.

Yoder, Mary Miller, 78, Sarasota, Fla., died July 1. Spouse: Amos Yoder (deceased). Parents: Gertrude and Mahlon Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Abbie Redcay, Gerald; three grandchildren. Funeral: July 5 at Ashton Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

Yoder, Shirley Stauffer, 66, Leo-Cedarville, Ind., died July 15. Spouse: Meredith Yoder. Parents: Menno and Lena Stauffer (deceased). Other survivors: children Lori Clark, Leslie, Lisa; six grandchildren. Funeral: July 19 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo-Cedarville.

Young, Doris Blair, 78, West Liberty, Ohio, died July 1. Parents: Frank and Dorothy Blair (deceased). Survivors: children Rebecca Allen, Elizabeth Figley, Martha Mount; five grandchildren. Funeral: July 4 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Zehr, Mabel Litwiller, 94, Gibson City, Ill., died May 29. Spouse: Silas Zehr (deceased). Parents: Amos and Barbara Nofziger Litwiller (deceased). Survivors: children John, LaVern; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 1 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

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classifieds

- **Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks a year-round ***food service manager***. Starting date is flexible.

  For further information, contact Dave Horst, 815-646-4344; email <dhorst@mennohaven.com>.

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Salem, Ore., has an opening for a 1/4-time (FTE) ***youth ministry leader*** starting Sept. 2001. Position open until filled.

  Please contact Salem Mennonite Church, 503-390-2715; email <newswanger2@home.com>.

- **New Covenant Christian School** is seeking a ***middle/high school social studies teacher*** beginning August 2001. NCCS is a member of Mennonite Secondary Education Council and the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

  Please send resumes to Neal Eckert, NCCS, 452 Ebenezer Rd., Lebanon, PA 17046; or call 717-274-2423.

- **Frazer Mennonite Church**, located in suburban Philadelphia, is seeking a half-time ***minister of children and youth***. Frazer Mennonite Church is a compassionate community walking with Christ toward peace and wholeness. This is an opportunity to creatively expand existing programs and develop new ideas in meeting the needs of children and youth.

  Please contact Jason Kuniholm at 610-644-3397 or <jasonholm9@cs.com> for application and further information.

- **The MAMA Honduran mission project** of Franconia Mennonite Conference is seeking a bilingual person to act as ***country representative*** and live in Honduras a minimum of one year. Opportunities for employment for a spouse also exist. The assignment would involve being the primary source for communication and oversight between the MAMA board in the U.S. and the programs in Honduras. The position also includes coordinating and managing visiting work teams.

  Contact Wallace Wolff at 215-723-7169; email <khww@voicenet.com>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks a ***director of alumni relations***, a full-time position in alumni development. The director of alumni relations has responsibility for the Bluffton College alumni program. The director reports to the vice president for advancement and will work with other advancement staff and alumni volunteers to plan and host alumni events both on campus and off campus. In particular, the director has responsibility to work with students to plan Homecoming and May Day events. In addition, it is the director's responsibility to conceptualize up-to-date communication approaches, including web-based methods, which encourage alumni to maintain relationships with each other and with Bluffton College. This director will also work with the advancement office records secretary to maintain alumni records. Basic computer skills are essential, and it is desirable for this director to have a master's degree or equivalent.

  A letter of application with a resume and list of references may be sent to Julie Krupp, Director of Human Resources, 280 W. College Ave. Suite 1, Bluffton, OH 45817-1196; email <kruppj@bluffton.edu>. AA/EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply. Application review will begin immediately.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** is seeking a ***director of financial assistance***. This position manages all aspects of student financial assistance for the university. This includes processing applications, awarding, disbursing and accounting for assistance from governmental, church, private and institutional funds. The director serves as a primary member of the Enrollment and Marketing Division and represents financial assistance issues in the development of recruitment and retention strategies for all university programs. Qualifications: The successful candidate must meet the following minimum requirements: possess a bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, or an equivalent combination of education and experience in financial assistance in a higher education setting. This person must have strong supervisory skills and a thorough knowledge of financial aid and federal and state policies. Ability to work in spreadsheet environment is required, as is accuracy in financial detail. The search committee will begin reviewing applications Aug. 15, 2001. The search will continue until the position is filled.

  Send a letter of application, a resume, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three professional references to Anthony Resto Jr., Director of Human Resources, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4108; <restoa@emu.edu>. Visit our web site for more information. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. AAEO employer.

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President

The Board of Trustees of Fresno Pacific University invites nominations and applications for the position of ***president***. Founded in 1944, Fresno Pacific University is owned and operated by the Pacific District Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. The university comprises three distinct schools: the undergraduate college, the graduate school and the school of professional studies. The university is characterized by an innovative approach to education, a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere and a firm commitment to Christian higher education.

The Board of Trustees seeks a president who will provide inspiring and visionary leadership to the academic mission, external activities and fund raising, and all aspects of the administration of the university. The ideal candidate will create a cooperative, community atmosphere, exemplify and articulate the core values, vision and mission of the university, and be an effective and vigorous spokesperson for the university's theological tradition.

Review of applications will begin on Nov. 1, 2001. Inquiries and nominations or letters of application should be submitted to Dr. Peter Klassen, Chair, Board of Trustees, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Box 82, Fresno, CA 93702. Phone: Dr. Peter Klassen, 559-255-6335. Phone: Sue Kliewer, Human Resources Director, 559-453-2245. Email <psearch@fresno.edu>. Fresno Pacific University provides equal opportunity for employment without regard for race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

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Another perspective on 'Fake Latinos'

by Carolyn Yoder

My adult life has been a series of comings and goings, as Rick, my husband, and I have lived and worked in the Middle East, Asia, East and Southern Africa and the Caribbean—interspersed with time in the United States. So I read with interest Tobin Miller Shearer's "Fake Latinos" (Jan. 9), "Following 'Fake Latinos'" (May 1) and the letters to the editor the articles stimulated.

While I have not heard returned overseas workers identify themselves as being "from" Central America, the Philippines or Africa, I have no reason to disbelieve Tobin and his colleagues, who say they have. But I offer a different analysis.

Over the last few decades, a body of literature has grown up around the issue of "third-culture kids"—children who spend a significant part of their growing-up years in another culture. They develop a relationship to more than one culture without full ownership in any culture.

I am not aware of a similar body of literature on "third-culture adults." But a parallel phenomenon exists. Home again in 1985, after seven years overseas, I talked endlessly to my husband about emigrating from the United States. It wasn't about not knowing my culture as a white person or about wanting to take on someone else's. It was about seeing my culture with new eyes and realizing that many of my previous, subconscious assumptions and perspectives had profoundly and forever changed. Although I looked the same on the outside, I felt adrift, disconnected, different in North America. I didn't belong to it in the same way anymore.

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Many of us experience transitions or life events and discover we cannot go home or see life in the same way again: moving from rural to urban life, finding oneself single after an unwanted divorce, the diagnosis of a life-threatening illness, the death of a child or beloved spouse. In our culture, rituals, support groups, books and other people's understanding assist in such crises. By contrast, returning overseas workers often flounder alone in their readjustment. In fact, it's often assumed we are relieved to be home again, thankful for Pizza Hut, shopping malls and manicured suburbs.

Tobin ascribes the strong response his articles have generated to "touching a sacred cow," that of "white returning missionaries taking on the identities of those with whom they served." But another perspective is that the reactions to his articles come from having a negative label put on honest attempts (albeit fumbling at times) to name the internal shifts and changed outlooks we have undergone.

The returning "fake Latinos" may be struggling to communicate the connection they feel to real people and real events in a world beyond the United States and Canada—not unlike the way Tobin is trying to connect his life-changing experiences from years of living in New Orleans. Maybe the descriptive words and conclusions sometimes miss the mark.

Calling these attempts "fake," then quoting North American people of color to bolster the point, squeezes the many-splendored international learnings we try to convey into a North American mold that does not fit. It adds to the silence we sometimes keep because we lack a vocabulary to convey international experiences in ways that connect "back home."

As I write we are about to leave our home in Jordan to make another transition to the United States. When we speak the things that we have seen and heard, will we be labeled "fake Arabs"?

Calling these attempts "fake," then quoting North American people of color to bolster the point, squeezes the many-splendored international learnings we try to convey into a North American mold that does not fit.

Carolyn Yoder left Amman, Jordan, last month after serving there with Mennonite Central Committee for three years. She is a member of Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

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Rich Preheim

Miracle to miracle

A year and a half before delegates supported Mennonite unity in surprisingly overwhelming fashion, there was in that same city a National Football League playoff game that also had an unexpected conclusion. It was a harbinger of things to come.

Nashville's Tennessee Titans were 16 seconds away from losing to the visiting Buffalo Bills on Jan. 8, 2000. The Bills, having just taken a one-point lead and apparent command of the game, kicked off to the Titans. In an amazing razzle-dazzle play, Tennessee returned the kick all the way for a touchdown, scoring the winning points with just three seconds left in the game. The play has been dubbed the "Music City Miracle."

That is now an even more apt moniker for last month's General Conference Mennonite Church (GC)-Mennonite Church(MC) joint convention in Nashville. Meeting 10 miles from the Titans' stadium, nine out of 10 delegates cast their votes for joining their two denominations to create Mennonite Church USA, a miraculous consensus in the wake of denominational fighting and fracturing.

The passage of the final merger measures at Nashville was never in doubt. But such broad affirmation for the plan was totally unexpected. Suspicion, ignorance and acrimony had been sand in the gears for years, never quite bringing the merger to a complete stop but certainly dragging it down. That was made painfully evident at the last convention, in St. Louis in 1999, which ended in discord and confusion.

The church in Nashville showed a remarkable and unexpected comeback from discouraging conditions.

But that set the stage for the working of the Spirit to produce the harmony and commitment at Nashville. Like the Tennessee Titans in their football game, the church in Nashville showed a remarkable comeback from discouraging conditions.

One earthly reason for the Mennonite version of the Music City Miracle is increased trust in denominational leadership, as shown by Nashville delegates' repeated proclamations. That was in stark contrast to the longstanding criticisms that the merger was only leadership driven and did not include the people in the pew, who were therefore wary of the move.

But perceptions changed in the last biennium as the rest of the church was invited to be part of the merger process, particularly for the membership guidelines. Feedback was solicited from church members, generating a volume of responses that eclipsed even those for the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. At the same time, the oft-lauded Constituency Leaders Council brought together people of diverse beliefs and backgrounds to participate in the church's discernment. All this has fostered vital grass-roots empowerment and ownership in the work of Mennonite Church USA.

A second explanation for the Mennonite Music City Miracle is the advent of the "missional church." One criticism through the years had been the lack of an articulated vision for the new church. Without it, the merger process was feared to be just an organizational restructuring. Since St. Louis, however, denominational leaders have formulated the idea that the church needs to be based on mission. At Nashville, delegates rallied around the prospects of being the church across the street and around the world, rather than slogging through the divisive issues of homosexuality and membership.

All these dynamics coalesced around the Nashville delegate tables. Rather than parading to microphones to make their points and rebut others, delegates gathered around tables to discuss their views face to face. Disagreements became personified in sisters and brothers in the faith—whom members of this new denomination are called to love and support—rather than just left as a vitriolic clash of beliefs.

Much work lies ahead for the new church. The desire for oneness needs to be fleshed out. The missional church concept needs to be more fully realized. Ongoing issues of theology and polity still need to be addressed. But in the wake of Nashville, Mennonite Church USA can move forward with hope and joy. May the Mennonite Music City Miracle beget even more miracles in our midst.—*rp*

the Mennonite

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why be Mennonite?

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Peace and freedom

I read Julie Hart's article ("Should Peacemakers Take Sides?" July 10) and about choked on my coffee. She used the example of the Philippines as a model reason on how and why peacemakers should take sides in political struggles. Some interesting facts that might explain why I, as a Mennonite, Christian and pacifist, strongly disagree with the notion of peacemakers choosing sides.

During the time of the Marcos dictatorship, Amnesty International concluded that in a 20-year period, 759 people disappeared (most likely killed) for being on the wrong side of the government. The Aquino government, with which, it's suggested, peacemakers rightly took sides in helping gain power, managed to help 830 enemies of the state disappear in only six years. According to Amnesty International's report on human rights in the Philippines, these 830 people were students, labor leaders, clergy, politicals and human rights organizers.

The Philippines today is no champion of human rights. The military has displaced thousands of its own citizens and has been accused of raping and killing innocent civilians.

I agree that the Marcos dictatorship was cruel and likely the greater of the evils that have followed it. But is choosing the lesser of two evils the model Christ would have us follow as peacemakers? As a peacemaker, what do you tell those who have been oppressed by the very government you helped put into power?

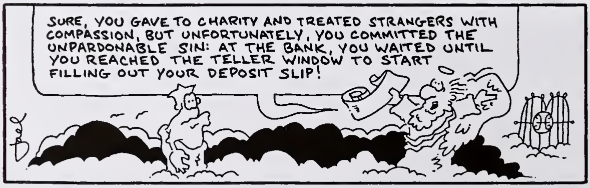
It is my view that Christ calls for us, as peacemakers, to advance his message of salvation, not start grass-roots political movements. Christ died on the cross offering us eternal life in heaven, not so that we can demand and organize justice on earth.—*Jonathan D. Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Julie Hart appears to make the assumption that the ministry of reconciliation of 2 Corinthians 5 translates directly into a calling to facilitate the creation of societal peace where it is absent. Without denying the responsibility of believers, especially those of us living in affluence, to contribute to the dismantling of structures of injustice, such a jump is to misread the text and the nature of the reconciliation we have freely received.

The reconciliation we have received and offer the world is the freedom from bondage that comes from recognizing the lordship of Jesus the Messiah (2 Corinthians 5:14-16). This bondage is present in all cultures and enslaves all people, though the outward manifestation of this bondage may be different. In the Balkans it may be most readily seen in the attempts at genocide; in the Philippines it may be revealed in economic disparity. But it is just as apparent in the radical individualistic consumerism of the United States (2 Corinthians 5:15). Entering into the shalom of God entails freedom from all bondage into service of Jesus that is by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:6-7). While the service might entail employing tactics that will make a transition or institution more peaceful, this should never be confused with the reconciliation itself.

There can be reconciled communities in Milosevic's Serbia, Marcos' Philippines and white upper-middle class America without the larger structures or injustices being altered (2 Corinthians 6:3-10). This is not to say that they can not or should not be confronted, only that the task of advocacy is secondary to the ministry of reconciliation. The danger is that we should be blind to our own bondage (after all we are rich and well fed) and offer, not freedom, but a new prison to those we seek to help. Only after we have begun to live in the freedom Christ has bought can we begin to address the world's conflict. Even then, the reconciled community should not be asking, "Should we take sides?" but rather "Whom should we confront first and how?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). While I do not think what was communicated in the article is necessarily opposed to what I am attempting to articulate, it could easily be overlooked.—*Daniel Winings, Somerset, Wis.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


SURE, YOU GAVE TO CHARITY AND TREATED STRANGERS WITH COMPASSION, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, YOU COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN: AT THE BANK, YOU WAITED UNTIL YOU REACHED THE TELLER WINDOW TO START FILLING OUT YOUR DEPOSIT SLIP!
Joel

Search, listen and test

In the July 3 Readers Say, Lois Kenagy quotes me from the article "But Not Business as Usual" (June 5) as saying, "What does it mean to let God decide and then follow that?" In self-defense, those words are a paraphrase of something I said during the interview.

I write because I agree with what Lois is

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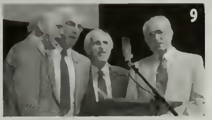
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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

saying. Worshipful Work should not be seen as a vehicle that makes us passive recipients of divine revelation, implying the outcome of the decision-making process must be the will of God. Just because we try to hear God or think we have heard God does not necessarily mean we have heard God. We are invited into relationship with God and continue to enjoy the freedom to respond to our best sense of God's leading, and yes, take responsibility for the outcome of our decisions. Worshipful Work is an attempt to remind us that kingdom work is incarnational, both God and humans joining to act together. Because we are tempted in business meetings to wander into thinking and behaving as if we humans are the only actors involved, Worshipful Work tries to be a counterbalance. I believe God does desire to participate and influence the outcome of our decision making in business meetings when we allow God to do so. Our Christian faith is based on the premise that God breaks into history to change its course and influence the hearts of humans.

I believe we can have degrees of clarity about God's will. Scripture is our clearest source. Tradition (the collective deposit of the church's long history of discerning), reason (common sense) and collective discernment in the present can be helpful when tested and found consistent with Scripture. Sometimes the prophetic voice from the individual or minority speaks God's will for the moment when tested and found consistent with Scripture.

But I agree with Lois. It is arrogant to assume that some technique such as Worshipful Work will necessarily produce the definitive outcome that nails down God's will. We see as through a glass darkly. Our best hope is to search and listen and test, decide and act, and then in humility continue to search and listen and test.—*Jonathan Smith, Hutchinson, Kan.*

Cover illustration
by Charles Millbern

why I became a Mennonite

first in a series

Being Mennonite is a gift and a challenge

One of the hallmarks of our Mennonite faith is that members choose to join the church. It is a voluntary community. We begin here a series of articles by members of the new Mennonite Church who write about why they chose to become Mennonite. We hope these stories help us all reflect on our own relationship with the new Mennonite Church.—Editors

by Arthur Paul Boers

People often ask me, "Why did you become a Mennonite?" The question comes from both inside and outside the Mennonite fold. I usually say simply, "It's complicated." If they press me, I tell my story of how as a teenager I decided to join a Mennonite congregation and leave behind the denomination in which I was raised.

But telling the how does not necessarily get at the why. This year marks the 25th anniversary of my baptism as an adult. As well as being my profession of faith and declaration of ultimate loyalty to God's reign, it was also my entry into the Mennonite fold. This milestone is a timely opportunity to reflect on why I became a Mennonite.(I celebrate my anniversary every year and am shocked that many Mennonites do not actually know when they were baptized. Churches should celebrate baptismal anniversaries, not birthdays.)

I still believe God called me to be a Mennonite. But the way I understand that has changed. Twenty-five years ago, I believed Mennonites were right and everyone else wrong. In fact, in the first article I ever published—about why I became Mennonite—I was smug and arrogant about how Mennonites were the truest Christians. By now I have become far too ecumenical and have been influenced, mentored, taught and challenged by so many Christians of various traditions (including the one I left behind) that I can no longer say such things.

Psychology helps me realize that at least one factor in becoming Mennonite was a healthy teenage need to differentiate from my family. I was such a pious goody-goody that I could not go in for serious rebellion. One way to grow more independent was to change denominations. It is no coincidence, I now realize, that within weeks of my baptism I also moved out of the house to attend university.

Instincts: While God undoubtedly works through our psychology, my call was more than just that. I am Mennonite. My instincts are Anabaptist. I cannot imagine having faith and being faithful without our core convictions about personal commitment, the importance of community, the priority of Scripture and God's mandates of peace and justice.

Why did God call me to be Mennonite?

I half-joke that one reason is that I could never have survived as a pastor in my original denomination, where I would be expected to preach at least two different sermons each week and pastor hundreds of families. The prospect still terrifies me.

But there are more important things at stake. For one, God called me to be a Mennonite because there was more room to explore and grow. In my childhood church, leaders were in a largely defensive mode that I now realize had more to do with the challenges of being a young immigrant church. When I dared to speculate and raise questions about what was then a key doctrine, predestination, I was told that I had to choose: either keep silent about my point of view or not attend our youth group. Stubborn Dutchmen should know better than to give such an ultimatum to another stubborn Dutchman. I was happy to withdraw.

As a Mennonite, I have felt great freedom to connect, learn from, draw upon and grow with many different Christian traditions and influences: evangelicalism, liberation theology, feminism, liturgical renewal, Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Celtic Christianity, Benedictinism.

Theological reflection: While I cherish this gift, it also touches on a concern I now have about us. I grow increasingly convinced of the importance of serious theological reflection. Yet I am sad to see that theological disciplines are weak among us. We avoid stating theologi-

Courtesy photo

cal convictions (whether out of fear of confrontation or because we do not hold them as important) or we reduce theological controversies to clichés or ideology. One reason I enjoy interacting with Calvinists (my original tradition) or Orthodox people is because they are not afraid to say what they believe and do the hard intellectual work that such statements require. It is probably not surprising that some of my friends and colleagues tell me that while my theology is Anabaptist, I have a way of doing theology and preaching that is more like that of my Dutch Calvinist ancestors.

Nazi occupation: There is another gift in why God called me to be Mennonite, one I have never told anyone. My Dutch parents and grandparents all lived under the Nazi occupation, and as a child I heard many horror stories about that experience. Consequently, I grew up with a prejudice against all things German. After university, I did what many youth did back then: I headed to Europe. I spent substantial time in many different countries but found that I could not bear to stay in Germany more than a few days. I am not proud of my prejudice, but it is real. Having moved into the Mennonite world, I am repeatedly faced with this: hearing German, having people address me in German or even trying to spell my name in German ways. This is no longer a pressing issue for me, but it was an area of growth, and I believe my life and ministry among German-rooted people is a small act of reconciliation.

The final reason God called me to be Mennonite also has to do with ethnic issues. As an evangelical teen, I chafed against the pronounced ethnicity of my childhood church. Being Christian was compromised, in my view, with overly strong attachment to being Dutch. I happily joined an evangelical Mennonite church that had many "non-Mennonite" participants. I thought I was free of ethnic bondage. But then I learned more and more. That particular congregation had begun as a Sunday school outreach by a local Mennonite church. There were many converts who wanted to be baptized and join the congregation. But since they did not speak German, membership was not an option.

Since then I have seen how ethnicity plays a major role in the Mennonite church. I am not as offended by that as I once was. Christian faith does need to be carried and supported within cultures. However, I also believe that being critical of and coming from one ethnic church into another ethnic church has helped me see some issues more clearly. And as an outsider who is by now an insider and even an ordained leader, I am able to address such issues. Ironically, as I look at both denominations, I would say that the church of my childhood handled some issues (e.g. transition to English) better than many Mennonites.

After 25 years, I still know that God called me to be a Mennonite. I am no longer as naively uncritical as when I was baptized. But understanding God's call and even naming some of the places where the Mennonite church is not only a gift but a challenge and goad to me are all part of maturing in my participation and involvement.

I cannot imagine having faith and being faithful without our core convictions about personal commitment, the importance of community, the priority of Scripture and God's mandates of peace and justice.

I am grateful that God called me to make my home among Mennonites and for the warm welcome and affirmation I have always received and still feel from my adopted sisters and brothers.

Arthur Paul Boers is pastor of Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Churchtalk

Mennonites will begin conversations with Lutherans to heal memories.

by Thomas Finger

The bilateral conversation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will involve five meetings over a two-year period. Mennonites will host the first, Sept. 13-16 in Goshen, Ind., providing Lutherans some exposure to our culture. Each denomination is sending a team of four. Mennonites will be represented by Gayle Gerber Koontz of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; John Roth of Goshen College and editor of *Mennonite Quarterly Review*; James Juhnke of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; and me.—*Thomas Finger*

If Mennonites are to be faithful to their own calling, do they need to be in conversation with other Christian bodies? Or will ecumenical relationships distract us from that calling, or even distort it? These questions are not simply hypothetical, for Mennonites already relate with Christians of other denominations in various ways.

On the local level, numerous Mennonite congregations work with other churches in community projects and joint worship services. Individual Mennonites often join other Christians in local religious organizations. Many Mennonites have close friends and, increasingly, family members from other denominations.

Mennonites also participate in various interdenominational efforts on the regional, national and international levels, especially when Christians organize to meet human need (for example, Church World Service).

Vaguely threatening: However, when it comes to more formal organizations referred to as "ecumenical," Mennonites tend to shy away. The adjective seems to conjure up something enormous, theologically suspect, amorphous but also bureaucratic, vaguely threatening. Mennonites have never joined either of the two largest ecumenical bodies in the United States: the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Council of Churches.

Over the past several decades, formal ecumenical contacts among many other churches have been increasing. Many such denominations are entering into dialogue. These "bilateral" conversations are held to foster greater respect, understanding and cooperation between these bodies. Sometimes they result in relationships of "full communion."

Mennonites in the United States have never been in a formal bilateral conversation. And having labored long enough to attain some unity among ourselves, notions like full communion are not on our map. (Full communion is less thorough than merger, for both denominations retain separate identities.)

Nevertheless, the new Mennonite Church USA includes among its goals increasing contacts with other denominations. This involves "developing bilateral and multilateral partnerships with churches around the world" (Nashville 2001 Delegate Workbook). In line with this, the new church will enter its first formal bilateral conversation next month: with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Healing memories: Those who know Mennonite history know that Lutherans were among those who persecuted our Anabaptist forebears. It may be important for Mennonites to begin healing memories of this persecution. In fact, this will be the main goal of this bilateral conversation for us. Full communion is not on the agenda.

Another reason for meeting is that the Lutherans have taken the initiative. They have been inviting us for 15 years to consider such conversations—partly because they are troubled by those memories that need healing. When they offer to help us heal them and ask us to account for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15), should we not respond?

Mennonites originated with the Anabaptist movement, which arose in Europe during the Protestant Reformation. Credit for sparking the Reformation usually goes to Martin Luther, whose followers were called Lutherans. Around 1517, Luther began insisting that the Bible is the only rule of Christian life and that salvation (or justification) comes solely from God's grace and is received only through faith.

Anabaptists took these insights further. If salvation is only through faith, they reasoned, then baptism, which incorporates people into Jesus' death and resurrection and into the church (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:11-14; 1 Corinthians 12:13), should only be for those who have faith. This meant that baptism was only for adults, or at the least for mature young people.

Though this may not sound like a stupendous claim, it was. Until Luther and others broke from the Catholic Church, almost all Europeans were baptized into it as infants. This meant that the membership of the church in any political territory was nearly identical with the general population.

Political rulers: This pattern did not change when churches became Lutheran or Reformed, for individual congregations did not make this switch whenever they decided. They did so when political rulers declared that henceforth all churches in their domain would be Lutheran rather than Catholic. Moreover, Lutherans and other Reformers continued to practice infant baptism. This meant that church membership in any European territory remained much the same as the general popu-

Marilyn Nolt

lation. But now the general populace in some domains was Lutheran, in others Reformed, and in still others Catholic.

The Anabaptist claim that baptism was only for those who confessed a genuine, mature faith was radical because it meant that membership in the church would be disconnected from residence in a political unit or state. It meant the two might become different. Anabaptists insisted that people with true faith would live as Jesus did. It was unlikely that most, or even many, adults in most places would make that kind of commitment.

Anabaptists were more radical because they insisted that if people lived like Jesus, they would never act violently. This meant that Anabaptists would not fight to defend the territories where they lived. But as political territories changed religions—as some became Lutheran or Reformed but others remained Catholic—they often became enemies and threatened each other militarily. Rulers became anxious about defending their domains.

Traitors: For this reason, rulers reacted harshly against those who refused to fight—especially if they declined to baptize their children in the church the ruler sanctioned and insisted on forming their own churches. Anabaptists were severely persecuted in both Protestant and Catholic territories. This was not usually for heresy—holding wrong beliefs—but for being traitors against the state.

This persecution was perhaps the most horrible in church history. Many Anabaptists were awarded a "third baptism": drowning. Uncounted multitudes were tortured, racked and burned at the stake. In 1527, about 60 Anabaptist leaders met in Augsburg, Germany. By 1530, only two or three were still alive. The lucky Anabaptists endured merely imprisonment, banishment, confiscation of property or loss of civil rights.

Revolutionaries: While Lutheran rulers were involved in this, some tried to reason with Anabaptists rather than coerce them. But it was a tumultuous era. A few Anabaptists actually were revolutionaries. Some peaceful ones were fanatical, impatient and hard to reason with. It was not always easy to tell who was who. Lutherans today do not sanction their ancestors' excesses. They want these memories healed and are taking the initiative.

Most of the Anabaptists' descendants, who became known as Mennonites, survived only by fleeing to isolated places. Over the following centuries they often changed into ingrown, ethnic communities. Though they were not often persecuted, Mennonites were frowned on by governments and shunned by the established churches.

By today, things have changed. Most Mennonites interact freely with other Christians when they know them locally or join them in broader efforts. Yet memories of persecution and cultural isolation still help shape Mennonite identity. They likely provide a reason why we shy away from large ecumenical organizations in which churches that persecuted or shunned our ancestors play major roles.

Throughout the lengthy process of forming Mennonite Church USA, we turned much of our attention inward. Now that we are ready to focus more energy outward, including toward other churches, it may be helpful to examine attitudes that hinder us in this, even if unconsciously. If such attitudes are shaped by our history, revisiting it with others who shared crucial phases of it, but from another perspective, can illumine this re-examination.

Reflective settings: Only as we learn how others see us, as we notice how we respond and discover how we are similar and different, do we come to know who we are. Mennonites already interact with churches with similar yet different histories and goals. Bilateral and other ecumenical conversations can provide intentional, reflective settings to learn from them, and for them to learn from us.

> **Only as we learn how others see us, as we notice how we respond and discover how we are similar and different, do we come to know who we are.**

In addition to healing of memories, the conversations will focus on understandings of baptism, church-state relations and ecumenical goals. Though locations for the next four meetings are still undecided, all five will occur in areas with significant Mennonite and Lutheran populations. Each meeting will incorporate people from local congregations of both denominations, so that they can come to know each other better and provide grass-roots input into the overall process.

As Mennonites begin their first bilateral venture, those of us involved are hoping for as much input from our broader denomination as possible. We will share our experiences as widely as we can. Ecumenical conversations can sometimes be conducted by specialists in obscurity. Neither group wants this. We will endeavor to represent our entire denomination as well as we can and bring it into the process as fully as we can.

Thomas Finger is a member of Reba Place Church, Evanston, Ill.

Thanks to MCC-supported project, Ugandans better able to reach out and touch someone

BUKOTO, Uganda—In a region where technology seldom goes higher than traditional tools such as the hoe, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is reaching out with 21st-century advancements.

"To North Americans, the computers may look a bit out of place in Bukoto," admits Jon Miller, an MCC worker and computer instructor in the Ugandan community.

Our center gives the community a large resource base for business and educational development.

—Jon Miller

But computers, cell phones and other modern inventions at the year-old Bukoto Information and Communication Center (BICC) are helping local residents advance economically, educationally and socially. MCC has donated several computers and a solar panel used for back-up power.

Nakawe Kaggwa, a vegetable dealer, uses the center to contact buyers about available produce. "This saves us a lot of time and money," Kaggwa says. "I can also communicate with my boss in case of problems."

Muguwanya Julius, an intern at the center, says: "At the BICC, I have gotten more knowledge about computers and books. Now when I have leisure time, I go to the library and read."

In addition to laptop computers and cellular telephones, BICC boasts a 1,000-book library, periodicals rack and daily newspapers, as well as educational CD-ROMs, which are used for adult English classes and by local primary and secondary students.

MCC photo by Dave Klassen

Jon Miller, a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Uganda, teaches a computer course at the Bukoto Information and Communications Center. MCC has donated several computers and software, plus a solar panel for back-up power.

"The amount of information available through our center puts us on par with many of the urban centers in Uganda," says Miller, who is from Atwater, Ohio. "Together with the communication services, our center gives the community a large resource base for business and educational development."

Telephone and messaging services provide a link to people outside the community. The area has no land-line phones, and among the 20,000 local residents there may only be 50 cell phones, most of which are not available for public use, Miller says. Using communication provided by BICC saves many locals a tiring trip to Masaka, the nearest city, 12 miles away.

"Information technology capabilities open up a huge world of possibilities for rural communities in developing countries," says Miller. "Local business people use the communication services for transactions in coffee trading, produce exporting, etc."

Fuel trader Ndali Abdu does business in Bukoto. "I like that the center has fixed prices for communication," he says. "Before we could be charged any price for using other people's phones."

Abdu also says his relatives use the center to inform each other of births and deaths.

In addition, the center also has printers, which are used to produce wedding announcements, business advertisements, church and local government correspondence.*—Maria Linder-Hess of MCC News Service*

Exhibit planned to be MWC family portrait

WINNIPEG—Walls and shelves are often adorned with pictures of family members. Ray Dirks is assembling a much larger display of religious relatives.

Dirks, curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, is traveling this month to Indonesia, Taiwan and Japan to begin developing "Our Family," a photo and art exhibition to be unveiled at Mennonite World Conference's next assembly, to be held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in two years.

The exhibit will feature some 20 countries from every region of the world. A Mennonite-Anabaptist family or single adult from each participating country will be featured in a photo essay detailing life in their country. Accompanying artwork will depict each country's culture.

Dirks will also visit Africa, India, Europe and Latin America.
—MWC News Service

MBM

The original Crusaders for Christ—(from left) Aaron King, Eugene Souder, Paul Swarr and Roy Kreider—perform during Mennonite Media's 50th anniversary celebration in Harrisonburg, Va., July 27-28. As college students, the quartet started a radio ministry in Harrisonburg in 1951, leading to the creation of the longtime program *The Mennonite Hour* and Mennonite Media, a program of Mennonite Board of Missions.

Conversion, convergence and culture

MBM's Mennonite Media celebrates 50 years of ministry

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Reel-to-reel tapes have been replaced by compact discs. A college quartet has been succeeded by videos. Plain coats have given way to suits and ties.

The media industry and the church have seen many changes in the past half century. But even by changing means and in different contexts, Mennonite Media still communicates the gospel.

Mennonite Media, a program of Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), observed its 50th anniversary July 27-28 in Harrisonburg, Va., celebrating its past and looking to its future.

Executive director Burton Buller says he doesn't know what lies ahead, but given the rapidly expanding field of communications technology, he believes in the role of the church.

"Now that the opportunities are here, we have two possibilities: that the church will grab that opportunity and try to make an impact, or we abdicate the possibility of evangelism to Hollywood," he says. "So what kind of commitment the church really has to being prophetic in this culture is a question that we continually ask."

Mennonite Media traces its beginnings to 1951. In March of that year, four students at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg—Aaron King, Roy Kreider, Eugene Souder and Paul Swarr—formed the Crusaders for Christ quartet and began an evangelistic radio ministry in collaboration with several area church people, broadcasting on a Harrisonburg radio station. The outreach came under MBM auspices in June 1951.

When various Mennonite congregations began releasing the broadcasts in other states the next year, the program was named *The Mennonite Hour* and remained a Mennonite Media staple until it went off the air in 1979. By then, *The Mennonite Hour* had spanned the globe, having been aired in French, German, Italian, Japanese, Navajo, Russian and Spanish.

The women's program *Heart to Heart* was added in 1958, and the first public-service radio spot was released in 1965. The first TV spot came four years later.

The 1980s saw Mennonite Media begin to use the new medium of video. The first video, *All God's People,* which told stories of people in ministry, premiered in 1986. That has been followed by a run of other successful videos, including the *Beyond the News* and *Rhythms of Peace* series.

Other efforts have included newspaper and magazine advertisements, a newspaper column and Choice Books, which became a separate organization in 1998. Third Way Cafe, an Internet ministry site, began that same year. Mennonite Media is now at work producing its first network TV documentary, *Journey Toward Forgiveness.* It is scheduled to air on ABC in December.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Mennonite Media is integrating its TV, radio and Internet work, a practice known as convergence. For example, when staff produce a new video, they also consider how its content can be presented on the Internet or radio.

"Because of technology, the processes of communication have become simpler and much more accessible," Buller says. "So specializing in one type of format is not as important."

The anniversary weekend, held in conjunction with the Virginia Conference delegate assembly, featured a reunion of *The Mennonite Hour* singers, a tour of Mennonite Media's headquarters in Harrisonburg, and a keynote message by Myron Augsburger on "Turn Your Radio On: Mennonite Witness in North America."—*MBM News Service*

Mennonite Media through the years

1951—Crusaders for Christ created in Harrisonburg, Va. Mennonite Board of Missions assumes program oversight.

1952—Crusaders for Christ becomes *The Mennonite Hour.*

1965—First public-service radio spots released.

1965—Bookrack evangelism (Choice Books) becomes a program of Mennonite Media.

1969—First public-service TV spots released.

1979—Final broadcast of *The Mennonite Hour.*

1986—*All God's People,* first Mennonite Media video, released.

1998—Choice Books becomes a separate organization.

1998—Third Way Cafe Internet ministry site developed.

Bank makes for land of milk and money

Dairy farmers' work supports MCC overseas efforts

EPHRATA, Pa.—On a sunny August day, when they could have been doing fieldwork or other outside activities, members of 10 central Pennsylvania dairy farming families spent the day inside. At the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) East Coast Material Resources Center in Ephrata, they loaded dried milk, canned meat and school kits for children in Palestine.

As part of MCC's Milk Bank project, the dairy farmers donate a portion of each milk sale to an MCC account. The Milk Bank then sells the milk to purchase dried milk and other dairy products. Last year 55 farmers participated in the project, raising more than $31,000 for MCC work.

Steve and Sue Neff traveled 150 miles to Ephrata from their 80-cow dairy farm north of Williamsport to help load the 40-foot container.

"We have been a part of this program since 1990," Steve said while shrink-wrapping a stack of bagged dried milk for shipment. "This is a great hands-on opportunity for us."

When asked why farmers would give milk to MCC when many struggle financially, Daniel Brubacher of Kutztown answered, "You don't look at it that way. The Scriptures tell us to give to those who need help. This is our way of helping."

Said Mel Nissley, who milks 170 cows near Middletown: "This is an excellent way for me as a farmer to give. By giving milk I really am giving a tithe of my total production and not just a tithe of the money I get.

"The Bible says we are all part of the body of Christ. We are not all hands or feet. This is my way of being part of that body."

In addition to the farmers, MCC worker Ed Nyce of Mount Joy, Pa., helped load the container. Nyce, who works in the Palestinian town of Bethlehem and is currently visiting family in Pennsylvania, was excited to be involved at the giving end of the process. "It is wonderful to see all these people giving not only their milk but their time to ready this container for shipping," he said.

The container left Ephrata on Aug. 2 and should arrive at the port of Ashdod, Israel, within the month. The milk, meat and school kits will then be transported to Christian schools in Beit Jala, Hebron and Ramallah. The milk powder will be used to make yogurt. In a prayer of dedication, the group thanked God for the hands that donated the supplies, the hands helping transport them and the hands that will receive them.—*Larry Guengerich for MCC News Service*

> **By giving milk I really am giving a tithe of my total production and not just a tithe of the money I get.**
>
> *—Mel Nissley*

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Project puts Native youth behind the camera to provide snapshots of Ontario community life

WINNIPEG—The idea of a photography project clicked with Wahgoshig. And the Algonquin youth in the Ontario village have been clicking ever since.

The concept is simple: Give a group of youth cameras and film, teach them photography skills and let them shoot away. The end product will be a book of photos and stories about life in Wahgoshig scheduled to be published this fall.

"The participants will choose the pictures. They'll do the captions. They'll be the ones who format their own book," says Lyndsay Mollins Koene, northern regional coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario.

MCC Ontario launched the project this spring in partnership with the Wahgoshig band council, the Ontario Arts Council and Waterloo, Ont., photographer Carl Hiebert.

Called a "shootback," the idea originated with Hiebert, who first encountered the concept last year in Nairobi, Kenya. He says he often questions his right to take photos of other people and cultures, and the idea of enabling people to take their own photos resonates with him.

"They've earned the right to be there and take pictures," Hiebert says. "It just makes philosophical sense."

While technical expertise is lost, he says, "the important thing is for them to be empowered and tell their own story."

Hiebert passed on the idea to MCC, which has been working in Wahgoshig, a community of about 140 people, for the past seven years. Hiebert visited in March to teach photographic techniques. About 30 participants between the ages of 6 and 16, plus some adults, were involved. Hiebert donated the cameras.

"It's something for the kids to do," says Sue Chokomolin of the Wahgoshig band council. "It's a small community. There's nothing to do here. During the March break, the kids were out of school, and they were really gung ho.

"Once the kids get together to choose what's going in the book, their faces are just going to light up."—*Carol Thiessen of MCC Canada News Service*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Feet feat

Don Sensenig, pastor of Stumptown Mennonite Church, Bird-in-Hand, Pa., and a former Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Vietnam, demonstrates a Vietnamese rubber band jump rope game during EMM's annual Global Fair, July 13-15 in Lancaster, Pa.

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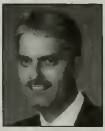

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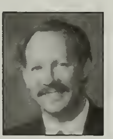

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this date in Mennonite history

Aug. 14, 1917—The first and only meeting of the Algemeiner Mennonitische Kongress, an organization of all Mennonite groups in Russia, opens in Ohrlorff, Molotschna.

Consortium to address health-care ethics

GOSHEN, Ind.—Anabaptists should find resources to process issues of ethical health care within the faith community, say participants at a recent Mennonite gathering. Meeting in Goshen July 16-17, the Health Care Ethics Consortium worked on a vision for equipping the church for dealing with such issues.

Among the consortium's objectives for the next year are: gather stories from the church, articulate what is unique about the Anabaptist perspective and begin to develop a model for how congregations and institutions might address health-care ethics.

Members of the consortium, which began meeting last year, are Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Chaplains Association, Mennonite Health Services, Mennonite Medical Association, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Nurses Association. George Stoltzfus, former Mennonite Church general secretary and physician, is the consortium's staff consultant.

India flood victims to receive MCC assistance

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is providing $50,000 in food relief for 12,000 families affected by flooding in eastern India. Two weeks of heavy monsoon rains last month left more than 1 million people homeless in the state of Orissa.

MCC's donation will purchase dry ration kits, which include rice, lentils, oil, salt, matches and candles. The kits will be assembled and distributed by the relief agency of the Indian Council of Churches.—*MCC News Service*

Manitoban blankets MCC with volunteer work

WINNIPEG—Annie Reimer's volunteer work for Mennonite Central Committee has been sew-sew the past couple of years. The 84-year-old resident of Steinbach, Man., has devoted herself to stitching blankets for MCC and recently finished her 100th blanket.

"I might as well do something," Reimer says. "I enjoy it. As long as no one pushes me to get one finished."—*MCC Canada News Service*

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Anabaptist History and Theology
Instructor: Karl Koop
Investigate Anabaptist beginnings; social and political developments; doctrine and church practice; and the relevance of the Anabaptist heritage for today.

Events

"Celebrating the Past and Embracing the Future," Sept. 1, open house at the General Conference Mennonite Church's Newton, Kan., central offices and evening worship service at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton. For information, contact Keith Harder, 722 Main St., Newton, KS 67114; 316-283-5100; <keithh@gcmc.org>.

"Handing on the Legacy: Celebrating 120 years of MBM," Sept. 1-2, in Elkhart (Ind.) County. Events include an alumni brunch, reunions, a mission festival and commissioning service. For information, call 219-294-7523; <Legacy@MBM.org>; or visit <www.MBM.org/legacy>.

Births

Goshow, Anna Kathryn, July 22, to Brian and Beth (Reid) Goshow, Souderton, Pa.

Harasymchuk, Myca Katherine, July 8, to Kevin and Leane Harasymchuk, Saskatoon.

Hege, Magnus, July 31, to Christine (Gehl) and John Hege, Quirnbach, Germany.

Heidebrecht, Sophia Joy Brubacher, July 7, to Carmen Brubacher and Paul Heidebrecht, Waterloo, Ont.

Kasitz, Adam Benjamin, July 18, to Debbie (Epp) and Todd Kasitz, Wichita, Kan.

Lehman, Micah Alan Hardt, May 27, to Todd and Dawn Hardt Lehman, Elkhart, Ind.

Meyer, Eric Ray, July 8, to Beth and Mark Meyer, Erie, Colo.

Schrag, Julianna Gering, July 14, to Eric and Gretchen (Gering) Schrag, Ritzville, Wash.

Schroeder, Kailey Rebecca, July 24, to Hans and Elma Schroeder, Steinbach, Man.

Zehr, Austin Robert, July 27, to Andrew and Aleta (Steria) Zehr, Croghan, N.Y.

Marriages

Arnold/Eriksen: David Arnold, Bechtelsville, Pa., and Janine Eriksen, Alpha, N.J., June 30 at Philipsburg, N.J.

Ayers/Nussbaum: Jeremy Ayers, Toledo, Ohio, and Philomena Nussbaum, Mount Eaton, Ohio, June 2 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Bare/Stoltzfus: Tricia Bare, Lancaster, Pa., and Jonathan Stoltzfus, Parkesburg, Pa., July 21 at Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Basinger/Nussbaum: Lloyd Basinger, Wooster, Ohio, and Anne Nussbaum, Kidron, Ohio, June 30 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Bessler/Moyer: Jesse Bessler, Telford, Pa., and Andrea Moyer, Telford, July 28 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Carpenter/Schulz: Cody Carpenter, Anchorage, Alaska, and Sara Schulz, Parnell, Iowa, July 20 at Parnell.

Do/Khouhathong: Vuong Do, Brooklyn Center, Minn., and Linda Khouhathong, Kitchener, Ont., July 7 at Grace Lao Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Eberly/Morris: Cynthia Eberly, Harrisonburg, Va., and Matthew Morris, Grottoes, Va., July 21.

Frey/Wenger: Joy L. Frey, Manheim, Pa., and Darren W. Wenger, Leola, Pa., July 14 at Lancaster, Pa.

Guldin/Schueck: Matthew Guldin, Boyertown, Pa., and Amy Schueck, Gilbertsville, Pa., June 2 at Boyertown Mennonite Church.

Hall/Nafziger: Tara Hall, Bloomington, Ill., and Scott Nafziger, Bloomington, June 2 at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.).

Hartzler/Mackey: Gregory Hartzler, Pandora, Ohio, and Laura Mackey, Bluffton, Ohio, June 23 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Hollinger/Kanagy: Ellen Hollinger, Lancaster, Pa., and John Kanagy, Lititz, Pa., June 30 at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Longenecker/Strite: Angela Longenecker, Bellefontaine, Ohio, and Ryan Strite, Harrisonburg, Va., July 14 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

Pain/Wiebe: Elvira Pain, Winnipeg, and Bernie Wiebe, Winnipeg, May 26 at Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg.

Sommers/Woodring: Scott Sommers and Kami Woodring, July 7 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio.

Deaths

Bumgardner, Charles, 72, Morton, Ill., died July 21. Spouse: Frances Zimmerman Bumgardner. Parents: George and Hester Bumgardner (deceased). Funeral: July 25 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Friesen, Linda Zielke, 91, North Newton, Kan., died July 9. Spouse: Waldo Friesen (deceased). Parents: Peter B. and Evelyn Wiebe Zielke (deceased). Survivors: children Duane, Larry; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Goering, Justina Epp, 82, Nanaimo, B.C., died April 4. Spouse: Edwin Goering. Parents: Jakob and Justina Epp (deceased). Other survivors: children Ute Goering-Boone, Dag, Jurgen; one grandchild. Memorial service: April 9 at Peace Mennonite Church, Richmond, B.C.

Miller, Howard R. Sr., 70, died May 27 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Sarah Mae Miller. Other survivors: children Carol Jean Sommers, Howard Ray Jr., Wayne Allen, Ruby Kay Wittmer, Nancy Ann Coblentz, Marlene Sue; 20 grandchildren. Funeral: May 30 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Vera Miller, 90, LaGrange, Ind., died July 10 of organ failure. Spouse: Willis C. Troyer. Parents: Francis and Magdelena Wager Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Helen Egli, Leona Overholt, Lena Delagrange, Donald, Philip, Bruce, Verlin, Willis Jr.; 25 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

White, Floyd, 93, Dalton, Ohio, died June 24. Spouse: Mary White (deceased). Parents: William and Nettie Martin White (deceased). Survivors: children Jay, Chloe Senften; five grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 29 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Wyse, Monroe B., 94, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 16. Spouse: Dora Short Wyse (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, John Mark, Rosalie Derstine, Grace Laffoon; 10 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Burial: July 19 at Harrisonburg, Va.

This video tells of MCC's recent return to the Ukraine. It illustrates how local citizens and church members are taking responsibility for needs in their community. See MCC's role in supporting the innovative initiatives of the Ukrainian people.

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classifieds

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- **Zion Mennonite Church**, Broadway, Va., seeks full-time ***pastor***. For information, contact Ron Piper, 540-432-4107; email <pipermr@aol.com>.

- **Childless Caucasian couple** desires to adopt a ***healthy biracial infant***. We are an attorney/social worker with solid pediatric experience.

  Please call Paul and Jo at 410-542-5803.

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Salem, Ore., has an opening for a 1/4-time (FTE) ***youth ministry leader*** starting Sept. 2001. Position open until filled.

  Please contact Salem Mennonite Church, 503-390-2715; email <newswanger2@home.com>.

- **New Covenant Christian School** is seeking a ***middle/high school social studies teacher*** beginning August 2001. NCCS is a member of Mennonite Secondary Education Council and the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

  Please send resumes to Neal Eckert, NCCS, 452 Ebenezer Rd., Lebanon, PA 17046; or call 717-274-2423.

- **One World Handcrafts**, an attractive nonprofit shop located in the Victorian college town of North Manchester, Ind., seeks a ***manager/ co-manager***. This store markets Fair Trade Crafts, including Ten Thousand Villages. If you have the passion or the dream of helping underprivileged people in 35 countries, this job is for you!

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- **Oak Grove Mennonite Church**, Smithville, Ohio, a rural congregation with approximately 230 active resident members, is seeking an ***associate pastor***. Responsibilities will include preaching, visitation and administration with an emphasis on ministry to youth, young adults and young families.

  If you are feeling God's leading, send letter or resume to Morris Stutzman, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, 7843 Smucker Road, Smithville, OH 44677; email <mstutzman@lhslaw.com>.

- **"Come to the Waters"** at ***Spruce Lake Retreat***, Oct. 5-7, 2001, Feb. 8-10, 2002, and April 26-28, 2002—three weekends of spiritual refreshment featuring the homey, laid-back setting of Mountain Laurel Lodge, brief guided meditations and plenty of space for your own reading, writing, walking and prayer. Optional spiritual direction available. Located in the Pocono Mts. (northeastern Pa.)with 370 acres of woods, streams and hiking trails. Package: $105/person. Call 800-822-7505.

- **Dock Village**, a subsidized family housing facility and affiliate of Dock Woods Community, is seeking a part-time ***social worker***. This position is responsible for organizing holistic resident services activities and programs. The social worker will work with residents and staff to resolve issues affecting residency. Candidates must have a B.S. in social work or related field in addition to 1-3 years experience in social work. Dock Woods Community offers a competitive salary and benefits package.

  Interested candidates should send resume along with salary requirements to H.R. Dept., 275 Dock Dr., Lansdale, PA 19446; fax 215-362-2682; <www.dockwoods.com>.

- **Hesston College** seeks a ***director of campus facilities*** to coordinate and direct the planning, design, construction, maintenance and renovation of buildings, grounds, equipment and other facilities. Duties and responsibilities of the director are to provide positive leadership for an existing, highly skilled, quality- and efficiency-minded staff; lead departmental planning; oversee maintenance, repair and construction of facilities; work with off-site contacts; coordinate campus safety and security efforts. The director manages subordinate supervisors in the department. The qualified candidate should have a bachelor's degree or 4+ years of progressively responsible related experience. Communication, mathematical, reasoning and computer skills are required. The individual should also demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education.

  Contact Wendell Sauder, executive vice president for planning and resources, 620-327-8217; <wendells@hesston.edu>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** is seeking a ***director of financial assistance***. This position manages all aspects of student financial assistance for the university. This includes processing applications, awarding, disbursing and accounting for assistance from governmental, church, private and institutional funds. The director serves as a primary member of the Enrollment and Marketing Division and represents financial assistance issues in the development of recruitment and retention strategies for all university programs. Qualifications: The successful candidate must meet the following minimum requirements: possess a bachelor's degree, master's degree preferred, or an equivalent combination of education and experience in financial assistance in a higher education setting. This person must have strong supervisory skills and a thorough knowledge of financial aid and federal and state policies. Ability to work in spreadsheet environment is required, as is accuracy in financial detail. The search committee will begin reviewing applications Aug. 15, 2001. The search will continue until the position is filled.

  Send a letter of application, a resume, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of three professional references to Anthony Resto Jr., Director of Human Resources, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4108; <restoa@emu.edu>. Visit our web site for more information. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. AAEO employer.

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Memoirs of the Spirit: American Religious Autobiography From Jonathan Edwards to Maya Angelou, edited by Edwin S. Gaustad (Eerdmans, 2001, $20), is a diverse collection of 26 spiritual autobiographies, each prefaced by a brief biographical introduction by Gaustad and a full-page portrait of its author, if available. It covers a wide range of faiths in American history: conservative and liberal Protestantism, conservative and liberal Catholicism, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and others.

Propaganda and the Public Mind: Conversations with Noam Chomsky by Noam Chomsky and David Barsamian (South End Press, 2001, $16) critiques the institutions that shape the public mind in the service of power and profit. Whether discussing U.S. military escalation in Colombia, the attack on Social Security, the rise of HMOs or growing inequality worldwide, Chomsky shows how ordinary citizens have the power to make meaningful change.

Your Child 6 to 12: Your Last Great Chance by John Drescher (Vision Video, 112 minutes, $24.99 plus $3.95 postage) is a three-part series that helps parents appreciate the uniqueness of the preteen years. Order from Vision Video, Dept. WM2/01, P.O. Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490; <www.visionvideo.com>.

Dutch Mennonite Mission in Indonesia: Historical Essays by Alle Hoekema (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2001, $18 postpaid) considers, among other themes, the role of renewal movements and lay activity in creating the right conditions for a church to become a sending church, the intimate link between missionary action and ecumenical relations, the meager role of Anabaptist or Mennonite theological ideas in the way these missionaries carried on their work and the consequences for the identity of the churches that came into existence. Order from the Institute of Mennonite Studies, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517, <bngingerich@ambs.edu>.

Mennonite Environmental Task Force Newsletter (Summer 2001) was mailed to every Mennonite Church USA congregation. It includes articles and resources that promote creation care in Mennonite congregations. For a free copy write the Commission on Home Ministries, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, or visit <www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/etf.html>.

Bridging the Generations by Katie Funk Wiebe (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) is about changing attitudes, intergenerational relationships in the church and bringing generations closer.

Plain Living: A Quaker Path to Simplicity by Catherine Whitmire (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $13.95) is not about sacrifice but about choosing the life you really want, a form of inward simplicity that leads us to listen for the "still, small voice" of God.

Gathering at the Hearth: Stories Mennonites Tell, edited by John E. Sharp (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99), includes 28 stories that reveal Mennonites' core values, who they are and who they want to be. Among these are stories of peacemaking Native Americans, pioneer life, revolution in Russia, migration, optimistic David Toews, Annie Funk and the *Titanic*, a near hanging in Kansas, Orie Miller, dismantling racism, Emma Richards and Marilyn Miller, Peter Dyck, Mesach Krisetya and a new search for Clayton Kratz.

The New Face of Vietnam (Church World Service, 2001) is a four-page study-action resource that highlights ways churches seek to stand with the people of Vietnam. The first copy is free; additional copies are 20 cents each. Order from Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515; 800-297-1516.

'Tis a Gift to Be Free: Daily Choices on Life's Path by Virginia Ann Froehle (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $9.95) is about daily choices we make that can lead us to inner freedom. It is about facing our fears, accepting ourselves as we are and trusting that God loves us.

Sharefaith.com services the charity and religious communities and seeks to bring more human interaction to the Internet. Among its features are free email services, online charity donations, daily religious news, online shopping, chat rooms and message boards.

Finding a Voice: Communicating the Ecumenical Movement by Marlin VanElderen (Eerdmans, 2001, $15) gathers some of the best of VanElderen's editorials from the World Council of Churches' magazine *One World*, which he edited before his death in 2000.

Recommended reading

The Story of Christian Spirituality: Two Thousand Years, From East to West (Fortress Press, 2001, $35) is a beautifully designed, fully illustrated overview of Christian spirituality. General editor Gordon Mursell writes a prologue on the meaning of Christian spirituality. He notes the influences of the Hebrew stress on integration and the Platonic stress on desire, which together "give the Christian spiritual tradition an astonishing vitality and inventiveness." Chapters follow on Jesus and the origins of Christian spirituality, the early church fathers, Celtic and Anglo-Saxon spirituality, saints and mystics of the Medieval West, the Eastern Christian tradition, the Russian spirit, the Protestant tradition in Europe, Catholic saints and reformers, the Anglican spirit, the Protestant tradition in America and the spiritualities of the 20th century. This is a great resource for any church library as well as for the general reader.—_gh_

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Gordon Houser

Pride and openness

Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
—Luke 12:32

I came to the Mennonite church in the summer of 1976 with mixed motives. I was idealistic and chose this particular denomination partly because its beliefs happened to coincide with mine. Over the past 25 years, however, I've come to see that I really came for other reasons, and I've received much more than I bargained for.

I was just out of college. I had been baptized as a teenager, and during my college years I participated in a number of churches and studied the Bible passionately. I decided to join a Mennonite congregation that was an intentional community.

Part of what drew me was the opportunity to obey the words that follow the verse above: "Sell your possessions, and give alms." That's not difficult for a poor college graduate. Nevertheless, such ideals moved me to join this Mennonite community I knew little about.

Over the next several years I experienced more difficult lessons than giving up my possessions. I had to learn to give up illusions about myself, that I had it together. I learned that I needed healing, needed to grow in faith and learn how to love others.

I'm still learning how pride hinders growing in faith and love.

One lesson occurred last month, as I was driving home from the Mennonite convention in Nashville, Tenn., when my car died. I and my three traveling companions were stranded on the highway about 10 hours from home.

I don't like being in such a vulnerable, out-of-control situation. Fortunately, a state trooper stopped and called for a tow truck, which delivered us and the car to Marion, Ill.

Unfortunately, this was late on a Saturday afternoon, when little is open. We could not rent a car at Marion's airport until the next morning. We were stuck.

Fortunately, we met Sergio. This Good Samaritan owns a restaurant at the airport. He offered to take us and all our luggage to a motel. He knew the motel's manager and told him to give us the best deal. He refused to accept my offer of money for all his trouble. And his cheerful demeanor brightened my numb, anxious spirit.

Sergio told us he owned several restaurants and planned to open more. He needed to provide employment for his nine siblings. I guessed that he had experienced much more difficult problems than what I was going through. He was not a rich man. Yet he gave his time and help freely.

Two weeks after this, friends from our congregation loaned us their car to travel to Missouri to attend a family reunion. We drove to Marion afterward and picked up our car when it was finally repaired.

Our friends' generosity humbled me. I would rather be self-reliant, not have to depend on others. But that is not how the church works. That is not the kind of kingdom Jesus promises his "little flock."

Mennonites also need help learning this lesson. From my observation of the little flock called Mennonite Church USA, many of its members like to help others, bring relief, rebuild homes after natural disasters, mediate conflict. But many of us have trouble accepting help.

In spite of our talk about humility, we prefer being in the superior position of giving the aid, being in control. We don't want to have to depend on others.

In his article "Church Talk" (page 6), Thomas Finger discusses Mennonites' reluctance to have much contact with other churches. While shyness from past persecution may play a part, I suspect there is some pride involved as well. Those of us, like Arthur Paul Boers (page 4), who became Mennonites as adults, see that pride as a hindrance to including outsiders.

People such as Sergio remind me that our family of faith is much larger than the little flock we call the Mennonite church. While I am happy to be a Mennonite, I pray that I and my church learn to give up our proud self-reliance and embrace the kingdom of God that Jesus says belongs to those who are the "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3).—*gh*

In spite of our talk about humility, we prefer being in the superior position of giving the aid, being in control. We don't want to have to depend on others.

the Mennonite

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not a level playing field

page 4

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9 Couple takes Anabaptist tenets to Ecuador
16 Stuffing a camel through the eye of a needle

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Inhumane injustice

Thanks to Merlin Friesen for "Coloring Outside the Lines in Health Care" (July 24) and calling us to a community-based response on behalf of our neighbors without health insurance and thus without affordable health care. May I suggest we as a church color even farther outside the lines by endorsing the growing movement for universal health care in the United States? Why should we do this? Because health-care access is an important peace and justice issue. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world that does not guarantee access to health care to all its citizens. Forty-three million have no health insurance; many millions more are underinsured. As a result, the United States is 18th among all nations in life expectancy and 22nd in infant mortality.

As people called to justice and compassion, may we, as Mennonites, be so bold as to proclaim that health care is a right, not a privilege. *—Ken Kraybill, Seattle*

Advocacy for the oppressed

I must thank Julie Hart for her insightful article "Should Peacemakers Take Sides?" (July 10). Her analysis of the stages of reconciliation strikes me as refreshingly honest in that it does not do the usual Mennonite vault into mediation and peace-building, the spheres where our cherished neutrality is appropriate. Rather, she acknowledges the period of empowerment and advocacy and the importance of standing firmly with the oppressed in the confrontation stage. Those who actively do this already know that it is the right thing to do, yet most of us have to expend much effort in justifying this to people worried about the evils of partisanship. Thus it is helpful to have a considered, articulate statement clarifying these roles. Too often our church's sincere quest for peace has been marginalized, even trivialized, by our reluctance to take sides. I hope this article is an indication that this is changing.*—Rebecca Dyck, Montreal*

Model of divisiveness

I was watching a TV special called *Nukes in Space,* about U.S. nuclear testing in the upper atmosphere despite not knowing the effect of the tests and thereby exacerbating tensions with Russia, which has increased its spending on rocket technology. My comment to my wife was, "Lynette, why didn't they just sit down and talk? They were jeopardizing the lives of millions." She turned to me and said, "Well, Walter, if it took the Mennonites so long to merge, how do you expect foreign countries to trust each other?" What hope is there for Ireland's Protestants and Catholics, Israel's Arabs and Jews, India and Pakistan, et al.?

Did we model a peaceful reconciliation process that these groups can learn from? Or will they say, "Look, even like-minded Mennonites had trouble getting their act together; what possible hope is there for us?" If we Mennonites needed a miracle in Nashville, does the world have any hope for solving its much deeper rifts? Better that we not speak of a miracle and instead humbly say maybe we too modeled divisive traits that almost pulled apart our potential future. Maybe the learning can be that once we saw the problems, we did address them in many positive ways. We puzzle why crisis hotspots in the world fight year after year when it would clearly be in their best interest to work together. Maybe we should look to ourselves for answers because we had difficulty in trusting even our own sister churches.*—Walter Bachman, Goshen, Ind.*

Short-term mission challenges

I thank the leaders of Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas for honestly sharing their protest as recipients of short-term mission ventures ("Stories of Protest About Short-Term Mission," Speaking Out, July 3). Short-term mission must move beyond travel adventure for affluent "gringos," whether old or young, or be abandoned.

Several of our mission agencies have prepared orientation materials that should help sensitize missioners to human and cultural dynamics. I believe no church should support any to go without this preparation. Not all education will take, but with better leadership, true humility and a servant spirit, we may avoid these egregious sins.

I'm sorry for what has been done to our sisters and brothers in south Texas. I hope they will define the remedial and restorative measures they would welcome and that the whole church will have the grace to listen.*—John M. Miller, Leola, Pa.*

Christian Peacemaker Teams delegations may offer an alternative to the mission group model so heartbreakingly lamented by Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas. CPT delegation planners include on-site staff. Typically

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Incorporating *Gospel Herold* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

the first several days of a delegation's visit focus on education. For example, in Chiapas, Mexico, last summer, we listened to representatives from various agencies with many points of view. In a CPT delegation's two weeks, an action is planned in consultation with local staff. For mission groups this could be the project. Permeating the whole experience is the attitude that we North Americans learn from the culture/community that we visit. Our hosts give us a huge gift of gracious care and teaching. —*Muriel T. Stackley, Pawnee Rock, Kan.*

I was saddened and shocked by the attitude of some youth who have gone to south Texas on a short-term mission. I fondly remember my own two-years of voluntary service (1955-1957) as a kindergarten teacher in Mathis, Texas. The local people were generous, hospitable, kind and helpful to us greenhorn VSers. My own faith was strengthened and nurtured during that period. Living among a people of another culture can be a very enriching experience. I believe, if properly prepared, our youth will accept the challenge of being partners and learners instead of superiors.—*Sarah Yoder Scott, Wilmington, Del.*

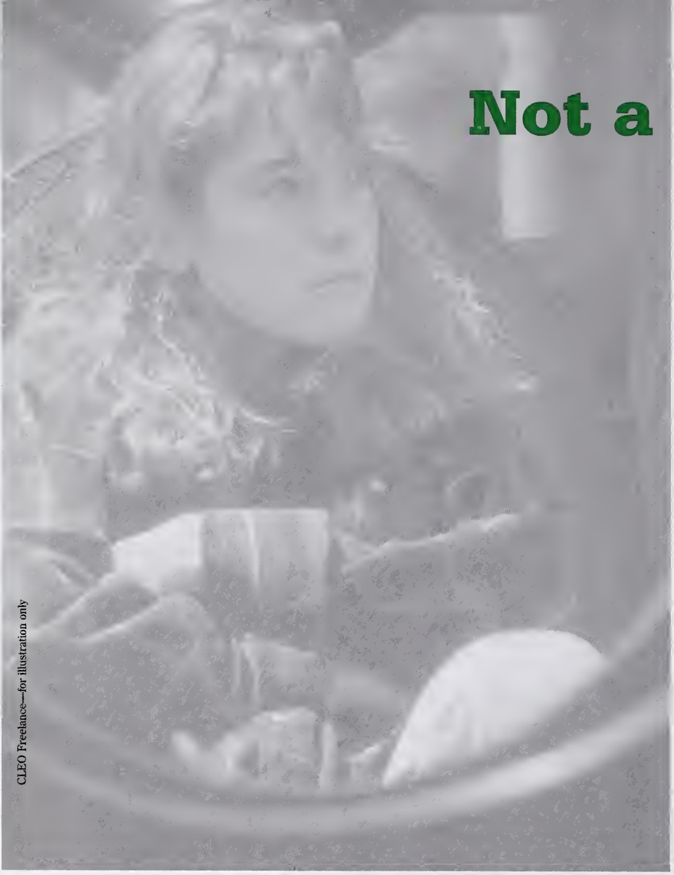
Corrections: In the Aug. 7 Readers Say, a line was omitted in the letter from Homer E. Yutzy. The complete paragraph reads: Are there any Mennonites who will not receive a refund because they did not have enough taxable income to pay income tax in 2000? If there are none, have we become the moderately rich and not-so-famous? I hope that there is room in the local Mennonite congregation for some people who do not have enough taxable income and therefore will not receive a refund. My IRS letter reads, "You will not be receiving a check at this time." I will not have a $300 check to share with anyone.

In the Aug. 7 Readers Say, letter-writer Weldon Schloneger was misidentifed as Wendell Schloneger.

Cover photo by CLEO Photography

Not a level playing

True equality cannot be found by organizing repeated competitions that over time only generate further inequalities.



CLEO Freelance—for illustration only

by Frederic de Coninck

Equality was to give opportunity back to each person. This was precisely the goal of the Jubilee laws.

In our society we generally accept the notion that competition takes place on a level playing field. Each person has an opportunity in the marketplace. Contests are expected to be equitable, the rules the same for everyone. One could criticize the very notion of competition, saying that social life does not boil down to competition; cooperation plays an equally important role. But in this article I would like to plumb the depths of this notion of equality by showing that even a competition that seems equitable may not be so.

Imagine an easy case to study: two players flipping a coin. It is difficult to find a more equitable example. Now suppose they are betting $10 each time and that one of the players has $20 at the beginning, while the other has $100. Naturally, if one of the players is bankrupt, the game ends. After six flips, the less wealthy player will be bankrupt 55 percent of the time, while the wealthier player will only be bankrupt one time out of 1,000. Is that equitable? I think not. It is clear the player who knows he stands to lose a lot will hesitate before running such a risk. This will allow the richer player to intimidate him by threatening to force him to play.

Unfair advantage: This theoretical scenario has a number of practical applications. In the raw materials market, for example, wealthy nations risk only an infinitesimal fraction of their fortunes, while poor countries may have to risk their economic survival. Rich countries can impose low, stable currency values on poor countries by threatening to give free rein to speculation. On a social plane, the one who has all the assets, who belongs to many networks, can more easily afford to take risks than the one who knows she will have a hard time recovering from a loss. Therefore, if in recruiting candidates for a position, we hope to find someone with a taste for risk-taking, we will give an unfair advantage to the one who begins with more assets.

Imagine another concrete situation, one in which all the players risk a significant part of their fortune. This was the situation of farmers in ancient Israel. A good harvest brought profits, while a poor harvest seriously depleted their reserves. If we assume a farmer could gain or lose the equivalent of a fourth of his resources every year (probably a reasonable assumption), we find that after 50 years 58 percent of the farmers would be bankrupt, while the more fortunate ones would gain from the losses of the others.

Even if we assume the surpluses would outweigh the losses (for example, by 20 percent), we arrive at a bankruptcy rate of 37 percent after 50 years. When the farmers were bankrupt, they had to sell their land and fall into an even less favorable position as sharecroppers, obligated to pay shares of their crops to the new landowners. They then had a small chance of being able to get out of debt. In most cases, they were eventually reduced to slavery.

Laws of Jubilee: These calculations shed new light on the laws of Jubilee as found in Leviticus. We can see that after 50 years there was a need to put a halt to the random and chancy business of good and bad harvests, or the result would have been a more and more

field

If we want to give a genuine opportunity to people who have fewer assets at the beginning, there must be some system to assure that they will incur less risk.

unequal society. Equality, in this case, did not consist of letting chance have its way or of laws to regulate competition. Equality was to give opportunity back to each person. This was precisely the goal of the Jubilee laws: wiping out debts, putting an end to slavery, so that each farmer could once again try his luck in an unbiased system of probability.

This brings us to reflection about today's world. If we want to give a genuine opportunity to people who have fewer assets at the beginning, there must be some system to assure that they will incur less risk. In fact, systems such as Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, unemployment benefits and others are much more useful to the poor than to the rich. They permit the less fortunate to try their hand at life, with much less fear of failure. A safety net can allow someone to try again after failing instead of sinking permanently into poverty. Further, the idea of a second chance will be much more significant for someone who has little support and few social resources than for someone who will bounce back no matter what.

True equality: In some situations we might even think that it is unreasonable to expect any risk-taking at all from someone below a certain level of assets. This is what developed societies aim toward (although sometimes in very small steps) when they institute minimum wages or welfare payments. Naturally these steps are criticized by the wealthy who think that everyone should have the same ability to take risks that they have. But, as we have seen, the same risk can be perceived very differently depending on one's assets and resources. Equality, true equality, cannot be found by organizing repeated competitions which, over time, will only generate further inequalities.

Frederic de Coninck is a member of the Mennonite Church of Le Foyer Grebel in Paris and a sociologist who writes a regular column in Christ Seul, *the monthly magazine of the French Mennonites, where this article first appeared. It is translated by Martha Yoder Maust, who is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.*

What would Jubilee look like today?

If there isn't really a level playing field in our society, and if the Jubilee is to be a model for how we ought to live, how do we put that into practice? Here are 10 suggestions:

1. Leviticus 25:35 says, "If one of your countrymen becomes poor and is unable to support himself among you, help him … so he can continue to live among you." Many congregations have a Jubilee fund or some other way of providing for each other in times of material need. "Mutual aid" is the general term for this kind of assistance.

2. Jubilee included letting the land lie fallow, to remember that God was the one who gave the harvest. Caring for the earth is one way of acknowledging that the earth and its fruits are gifts from God, not only fruits of our labor.

3. Jubilee also included returning land to its ancestral owners. If we who own land think this is not feasible, perhaps we can find ways to acknowledge that our land was taken from its first owners hundreds of years ago and devote a portion of our income to projects that assist Native American communities. (The summer service program of Mennonite Central Committee U.S. is one example.)

4. While none of us owns slaves, some of us have employees. A fair wage and good working conditions are mandatory, and creative ideas such as profit-sharing can also express the spirit of Jubilee.

5. Forgiveness of debts was the cornerstone of Jubilee. We could support the cancellation of international debts, especially for countries whose economies are in shambles and who have no hope of repayment.

6. On a personal level, Jesus encouraged us to "lend, expecting nothing in return" (Luke 6:35). Our desire to be good stewards sometimes needs to be balanced by willingness to give generously, knowing we may not be repaid.

7. Buying from Ten Thousand Villages is one way to work at leveling the playing field in a small way, providing income for people who are disadvantaged by the global economy.

8. Some congregations have encouraged members to set aside 2 percent of their incomes before their tithes, to be sent to development projects in developing countries, as a way of offsetting the inequality of the global marketplace.

9. On a larger, societal level, many programs are intended to help those with the fewest resources: food stamps, minimum wages, welfare payments, affirmative action in education or in hiring, regulations about access for disabled people and more. While these programs have their faults, their basic intent—to have those with more resources assist those with the fewest—is in keeping with the spirit of Jubilee.

10. Most North American Mennonites own cars, while Mennonite pastors in Congo who serve several villages may not be able to afford a bicycle. North American Mennonites have many Mennonite schools, colleges and seminaries, while the Meserete Kristos Bible College in Ethiopia struggles to put up its first building. These inequalities between us and our brothers and sisters overseas should challenge us.—*Martha Yoder Maust*

Fund-raisers: fun

Musings about the ways we ask each other for money

by Martha K. Weaver

While we enjoy working together for a common cause, fund raising may have become so much of a fun thing that we miss the joy of secret giving. A friend asked me to buy popcorn to help relocate their pulpit at the other end of the sanctuary. This topped my list of fund-raising techniques. More and more, we must decide, for example, if we will buy popcorn. We must decide what merits our support.

As members of the body of Christ, we constantly face opportunities to help finance church-related and community projects. Our schools, camps, missions, relief and countless organizations hold a variety of fund-raisers. The list may include banquets, barbecues, auctions, walk-a-thons, activities that make sense and those that don't.

Quilters sometimes ask if making more practical bedcovers would be more helpful than making expensive quilts and wall hangings.

A repairman said he did not have time to attend a school auction to be held the next day. Hearing the tone of his voice, I asked if we have too many of them. "We don't know when we have enough of them. That's the trouble," he told me. For him, making money gave him more to give.

The auction began with a Scripture reading that included, "O give thanks unto the Lord." The prayer indicated that the school family made their children top priority. Parents and children worked purposefully together to help. Grandmothers eyed their quilts as bringing sizable donations. All the while sale participants snacked on all kinds of goodies. On one occasion an announcer said, "Today you can eat to the glory of God as all proceeds will go the Lord's work."

A patron of an interdenominational church made an extra trip to bring her cookies. Her church solicited no funds outside their church community. They channeled all expenses through the church budget. A Mennonite minister expressed concern that so many Mennonites solicit funds outside their constituency.

A missionary friend visited another denomination for a morning service. From the parking lot to the sanctuary door, three groups approached her to buy something for specific projects in their church. Bewildered, she asked herself if she came to a worship service or to a marketplace.

Who does not want to support young people to go to church conferences? One group held an all-night rock-a-thon. A grandmother did not approve of this. She wanted her granddaughter to get a good night's sleep. She needed someone to wash her windows; she would pay for this to help with the group's trip but found no one available. In another case, when not every-

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Correction: Due to an error in the production process, James Schrag's name was omitted from the recipe he provided on page 7 of the Aug. 7 issue. Jim is executive director of Mennonite Church USA.

or folly?

one sanctioned a project, a donation system brought in more funds than needed.

Supper room: Do we ask, What would Jesus do? Do we honor our Mennonite ethic of living a simple life in a world of need? More than a generation ago, our ministers showed concern that "popular churches" (a way they classified non-Mennonite churches) replaced the upper room with the supper room. They saw bake sales as an inferior way to raise money. Many of our forebears gave secretly as the Lord prospered them. They believed "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

My parents exemplified secrecy in giving. For several years after World War II, my father bought a ton of peas from a local cannery. We carried each carton with 24 unlabeled cans to the kitchen table. On each can we pasted Mennonite Central Committee "In the name of Christ" labels. On some cans we wrote our name and address. We returned the peas to the truck and delivered them to MCC. We happily completed the project without neighbors and friends learning about it.

Eventually we received an influx of thank-you letters in German script, typed or in English. My parents corresponded with many of these people and sent them religious German verse calendars. We also sent packages to those who needed extra help. Later, my father spent 75 days in Europe visiting some of those people and saw firsthand the destruction of the war. Most of all, he heard their stories and thanks to MCC for the peas that came at a crucial time in their lives. These contacts continued to bless our family as many foreign visitors came to our home.

Quilts do much to raise donations for Mennonite relief sales and other church-related organizations. Women delight in doing this, but the demands outdo the amount of quilts that can be produced. Some sewing circles discontinue, as quilters' fingers stiffen and younger people do not acquire the skill.

At one sale when quilts did not bring good prices, the person next to me said, "I wonder if sales have had their day." Quilters sometimes ask if making more practical bedcovers would be more helpful than making expensive quilts and wall hangings.

With the advent of banquets in the 1950s, I went 30 miles one way to my first one to support an evangelistic campaign. The "outrageous" price of $3.50 for a meal at a hotel floored me, when $1 bought a meal at a restaurant. I learned that it also helped pay the speaker. What a shock when they asked for an extra offering for which I was not prepared!

License to overeat: A large number of senior citizens attended a banquet where we received huge portions of food, which made us decide if it went to "waist" or "waste." I was thankful my husband asked for a doggy bag. After filling ourselves, we brought home enough food for much of the next day's dinner. The offering went to the poorest of the poor. Does that give us license to overeat or waste food?

In a 10-day period we received invitations for six church-related meals. One listed its entertainment with food for $100, with a table for 10 at $1,000. This makes one ask if such events are worth our time and money. What about the many people who in no way can afford extra expenditures?

In years past, we filled our churches to hear presentations about mission, relief and other needs in special conferences and Sunday evening meetings. Young and old felt their obligations to people at home and abroad. Listeners gave generously without thought of receiving food, material items or prizes for collecting the most money.

Has fund raising become so much of a fun thing that we miss the joy of secret giving?

Martha K. Weaver is a member of Sandy Hill Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Top 10 lessons about giving and generosity

10 No church or agency needs our money as much as God needs us to become generous people.

9 Giving is an extension of God's grace. Giving helps us extend God's gift of grace to others.

8 Money is an important extension of our values, reaching where we cannot reach and going where we cannot go.

7 My generosity is a barometer, reflecting how I'm doing at loving the Lord with all my heart and my neighbor as myself.

6 Generous people have never seemed angry at being invited to give.

5 Many of us will not learn to be generous unless we are asked.

4 What goes around comes around: Giving trends tend to cycle between individuals giving to specific ministries versus giving through unified spending plan.

3 Jesus is concerned not only about what we give but about what we keep.

2 Churches and denominational agencies must offer a growing variety of giving opportunities to connect with the compassion and vision of young people's lives.

1 No church or agency needs our money as much as God needs us to become generous people.—*From a dialogue sermon by Firman and Susan Gingerich. Firman is lead pastor of College Mennonite Church, and Susan is development director at Bethany Christian Schools, Goshen, Ind.*

'An ain't-nobody-happy kind of feeling'

South Central vote reflects mixed sentiments on merger

LAWRENCE, Kan.—The spirit of denominational unity had been flying high in the month since General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) delegates' surprisingly strong decision to merge. But that feeling has been deflated a bit with South Central Conference's decision to become provisional members of the new Mennonite Church USA.

South Central is not the first MC area conference to opt for provisional membership. But its annual delegate session Aug. 10-11 in Lawrence displayed disagreements as sharp as anywhere in the church over affiliation with Mennonite Church USA.

A recommendation to become charter members received support from 54 percent of the delegates, well short of the two-thirds vote required for passage. The delegate vote reflected the conference executive committee, where five of the nine voting members supported bringing the recommendation to the delegates.

In a follow-up vote, 73 percent of delegates voted against a recommendation—also from the executive committee—to not join Mennonite Church USA. The two actions automatically mean South Central will become provisional members.

Moderator John Otto, who said he was not surprised by the outcome of the two votes, said the executive committee brought the two opposite recommendations "to find definition of where we're at."

The level of disagreement within the conference was apparent in reports from South Central's four districts. Of Arkansas-Missouri's 10 congregations, only one has officially expressed support for joining Mennonite Church USA, while as many as six could withdraw should South Central do so.

"We feel like we are holding true to what the Mennonite Church has held on to for more than a century," said Arkansas-Missouri moderator Dale Bentch.

Kansas-Oklahoma representative Howard Wagler reported his district was a "diverse group."

The other two districts advocated charter membership. All 13 Mid-Texas congregations are also members of the GC Western District Conference. Unidad Cristiana de Iglesias Menonitas, the district of Hispanic congregations in southern Texas and northern Mexico, also expressed its commitment to Mennonite Church USA, albeit tentatively.

"We are aware that we should be all-inclusive, but we need to adhere to one biblical understanding of church," said district moderator Lupe Aguilar. "We will be looking to see what will happen in the next two years."

The votes generated a range of responses. "It's kind of like an ain't-nobody-happy kind of feeling," said Janice Wood from Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, Okla.

"I feel a profound sense of brokenness and sadness not feeling fully connected to Mennonite Church USA," said John Murray, delegate from Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church and former co-chair of the Integration Committee. "I feel a profound sense of brokenness for those who could not come along if we were charter members."

Randy Evers, a delegate from Harrisonville (Mo.) Mennonite Church, which is considering withdrawing from the conference, urged that those in favor of Mennonite Church USA not view those opposed as the enemy. "They did not try to stir up problems or cause anger or hurt you," he said. "Be careful that your emotions don't place blame."

South Central now waits to see what the effects will be on at least two areas of conference business. One will be income implications if and when congregations start withdrawing. The second is regional integration discussions with Rocky Mountain and Western District conferences, both of which have declared their support for Mennonite Church USA.

South Central becomes the first area conference to vote down a proposal to become a Mennonite Church USA charter member. Franklin and Southeast conferences had previously decided to be provisional members, but had done so without taking action on charter membership. Uncertainty also exists elsewhere, including Virginia Conference, which this summer postponed until January 2002 a vote on denominational membership.

One current MC conference, Puerto Rico, has decided not to join Mennonite Church USA. It will seek fellowship with other Caribbean and Latin American Mennonite groups.—*Rich Preheim*

Membership choice: charter, provisional

For members of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), the issue of membership in Mennonite Church USA is pretty clear-cut: Unless they opt out, they are automatically in by virtue of last month's delegate vote in Nashville, Tenn.

MC area conferences, unlike their GC counterparts, have until Feb. 1, 2002 (the date Mennonite Church USA is to begin), to formally declare themselves as charter members of the new denomination. Or they can decide to come in as provisional members, or they can make no decision, which will automatically make them provisional members on Feb. 1. Or they can choose not to join at all.

The rights and responsibilities are the same for both categories of membership. The only difference is provisional membership is temporary, granting extra time to those who need to discern their future with the new denomiation. Those area conferences with provisional membership will have until Jan. 31, 2007, to decide if they want to be members of Mennonite Church USA. After that time, there will be no provisional membership option.

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Adios, AMIGA

Juan Montes (center), president of the General Conference Mennonite Hispanic organization AMIGA, recognizes Gilberto Flores, director of the Commission on Home Ministries' Hispanic Resource Ministries, and Violeta Ajquejay, Hispanic Resource Ministries administrative assistant, during AMIGA's final meeting Aug. 5-7 on the Bethel College campus in North Newton, Kan. AMIGA and the Mennonite Church's Hispanic Mennonite Convention have merged to form Iglesia Menonita Hispana, which was officially introduced at last month's joint GC-MC convention in Nashville, Tenn. Montes, of Reedley, Calif., has been named the first moderator of the new Iglesia Menonita Hispana.

Colombian couple takes Anabaptist tenets across the border to neighboring Ecuador

QUITO, Ecuador—César Moya and Patricia Urueña, husband and wife workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission-Mennonite Board of Missions in Ecuador, describe their ministry objective as bringing more people to the table—literally as well as figuratively.

Since April, Moya and Urueña have been part of a group of 25 adults and 15 children that has met weekly for table fellowship in each other's homes. No one else in the group previously attended church regularly.

This informal group is just one of Moya and Urueña's efforts to promote Anabaptism in Ecuador. They teach courses on Anabaptist themes and lead workshops on conflict resolution at Latin American Christian University in Quito. Outside the university setting, they have led peace seminars, written on human rights and conflict resolution, participated in Catholic dialogues and preached in local congregations.

"[Moya and Urueña] have found a vacuum in the Christian community, that of conflict resolution," says Janet Plenert, COM-MBM director for Latin America. "They have been called upon by the Christian university, human rights organizations and indigenous groups to bring this Anabaptist strength to the table."

Although Moya and Urueña didn't go to Ecuador with a church-planting assignment, they ask whether a Mennonite church might be the logical next step for their students and friends who are embracing the Anabaptist vision.

While teaching, Moya and Urueña say they are also learning. They make weekly trips into the mountains of Riobamba, where they are involved in a variety of educational initiatives—from preschool to university level—for indigenous people.

"Mission is so much more than taking the gospel to a people," Urueña says. "[Indigenous people] have taught us about what it takes to have strong community relationships, about active nonviolent resistance, about gratitude to God, about people being co-creators with God, and about responsible ecology."

Although indigenous peoples account for 45 percent of Ecuador's popluation, they are held in contempt by the rest of the country. "It is false to see the indigenous people as poor and insignificant," Moya says. "They are a strong people and a large political force. They helped oust the president in 2000. A few months ago, it looked like they would throw out the current president as well."

Moya and Urueña and their three children —Daniel, 13; Juan 11; and Andrea, 10—arrived in Ecuador from their native Colombia in January 2000. For the previous seven years, Moya had been either president or executive secretary of the Mennonite Church in Colombia.

Even though Colombia and Ecuador are neighbors, Moya and Urueña say they have had to adapt to another culture. "If we don't talk, people on the street might think that we are Ecuadoran," Urueña says. "However, as soon as we open our mouths, people know we are Colombian."

Adds Moya: "What is a normal statement in Colombia is seen as abrasive in Ecuador. While Colombians run red lights without a second thought, Ecuadorans will not go 50 miles per hour in a 40-mile-per-hour speed zone."

As foreigners, it was difficult to obtain places for their children in the school system, and Moya and Urueña needed to pay higher school fees. Market women try to charge them more for food, and it was difficult to rent a house.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

Agreements result from Congo forum

In a historic inter-Mennonite forum, 65 leaders of Congo's three Mennonite denominations agreed on a number of issues, including fraternal relations and the role of women in the church.

The meeting, held in Kinshasa in June, was the first broad gathering of pastoral leadership from the country's Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Evangelical Mennonite churches.

Participants called for efforts to reinforce unity and mutual aid among the three denominations. They also called for the creation of a commission to identify the weaknesses within their churches, such as unity, Anabaptist teachings, mission and fraternal relations with other partners.

Participants also agreed on the need to articulate a vision, popularize Anabaptist theology and give priority to conflict transformation.

Among other decisions, participants agreed to work toward the ordination of women in pastoral ministry and encourage the education and training of women.

The forum was sponsored by the Congolese Inter-Mennonite Committee. —*MWC News Service*

MCC drama troupe shows that 'disabled people can do anything' as they present Bible messages

FRESNO, Calif.—When God showed Samuel whom to anoint as king of Israel, the old prophet was surprised: God didn't choose the tallest or the oldest of Jesse's sons.

The 10 people who make up the Charis Community Players can identify with David, the unlikely king who is the subject of their most recent drama. Because these actors all have developmental disabilities, they may be overlooked when churches seek spiritual insight.

But like David, Charis members want to serve God wholeheartedly. While their main goal is to make the Bible and Bible-based truths come alive for their audiences at churches and community events, they also have another message. As Janet Krause, 29, puts it, "Disabled people can do anything."

Krause has been a member of Charis—Greek for "grace"—since the group began about a year and a half ago, when Jim Somerville, director of developmental disabilities ministries for West Coast Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), announced his idea for a drama troupe at Hathaway Apartments. The semi-independent living facility with MCC roots is home to 32 people with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and uncategorized mental retardation.

"Eight people said, 'Me, me, me!' and they're all still there, plus two more," Somerville says. "It's a long-term commitment for them.

"I have come to recognize that this group of people often understands more about the Christian faith than the rest of the population. They understand some very profound things: the extending of grace, lack of pretense and the immediacy of faith."

Troupe members range in age from lower 20s to lower 70s. They get together once a week to practice and brainstorm for future presentations, including costumes and props. Somerville's role is to record rather than generate ideas, then compile those ideas into a script.

"Our group is very creative," Krause explains.

So far, in addition to the story of David, they have created dramas about the Prodigal Son, the Christmas and Easter stories and the precept "You reap what you sow."

For last year's Christmas presentation, Krause had the idea to frame the familiar Bible passages as a conversation between an angel and someone who had never heard of Jesus. Wanda Griffin, 34, played the person learning about the baby born in Bethlehem.

"I really enjoy sharing the Word of God and in sharing the life in these stories," she says.

Griffin—who, like the others, says she never suffers from stage fright—also enjoys talking to audience members after performances.

"One man came up to me after we did the Prodigal Son," she says. "He said, 'Now I've got to go home and read that story in the Bible.' "

Sometimes performances unfold in unexpected ways. A performance of the Christmas play at Hathaway Apartments appeared to be over.

"But I said, 'Wait a minute!' " Krause says. "I wanted to tell people that having God in your heart is the perfect gift, the best Christmas present."

The impromptu altar call that followed "touched a lot of people's lives," she says. "What we do is like a mission. Even after they go home, people will remember the play."
—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service

Ask and ye shall receive at web site

The questions come from a variety of people: researchers, clergy, curious laypeople. And they want to know a variety of things: What role do women play? Is speaking in tongues required for salvation? Do pregnant Mennonites receive obstetrical/ prenatal care?

Erma Brunk answers most every one.

Brunk, of Harrisonburg, Va., responds to the 50 to 70 questions about Mennonites sent monthly to Third Way Cafe, Mennonite Media's website and online ministry. She also responds to questions sent to Mennonite Church USA's web site.

"It has challenged me to put into words my understanding of Mennonite faith," says Brunk, a former mission worker and librarian. "I love the challenge of it."

Some inquiries deal with common questions of doctrine and dress, others are deeper, such as the recent one asking about "apostolic continuity" in the church. For those, Brunk consults with professors and pastors as well as with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.—*MBM News Service*

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- **An open house** on Saturday, Sept. 1, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the General Conference offices at 722 Main, Newton, Kan., for storytelling, reconnecting with former staff and commission members, refreshments
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General
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Mennonite
Church

MBM photo by Grant E. Rissler

Drink from the cup

Mark Thiessen Nation, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in London, takes Communion during a colloquium of European workers Juy 28-Aug. 4 in Barcelona, Spain. The colloquium drew 90 MBM workers and European Mennonites from 10 countries.

Zimbabwe church starts work with AIDS patients

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe—As AIDS continues its rampant run across Africa, the Brethren in Christ (BIC) Church of Zimbabwe is joining the battle against the pandemic. The denomination has started a project to care for patients with HIV/AIDS.

With $150,000 in grant money from the Canadian International Development Agency and $22,000 from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the Zimbabwe BIC will purchase supplies for volunteer home-care workers, including bicycles, gloves, bandages, sheets and aprons. Training will also be provided.

"The church is admitting that we can no longer be bystanders but should be actually involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS," says Doris Dube, MCC's co-representative in Zimbabwe.

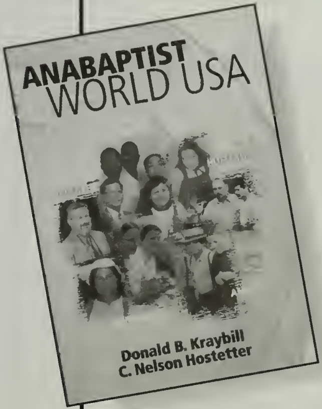
Some 1.5 million people in Zimbabwe are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The BIC project was launched in June with a daylong celebration, including speakers from the church and government.

"The sick among us are our loved ones," said BIC bishop Danisa Ndlovu.—*MCC News Service*

The church is admitting that we can no longer be bystanders but should be actually involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

—Doris Dube



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this date in Mennonite history

Aug. 21, 1894—Elkhart (Ind.) Institute, forerunner to Goshen (Ind.) College, begins operation.

MMA approves board reorganization

CHICAGO—The Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) board of directors will be smaller and more diverse, members voted at their Aug. 3-4 meeting in Chicago. The approved plan calls for scaling down the board size to 10 to 15 members from its current 17 while adding representatives from the Brethren in Christ and Conservative Mennonite Conference.

The new board composition is expected to be in place by the end of 2003. The smaller board will occur through attrition; as some members' terms expire, their seats will not be filled. While MMA serves a variety of Anabaptist and related groups, only Mennonite Church USA (General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church) and Mennonite Brethren have been represented on the board.—*MMA News Service*

COM workers observe 50 years of work in Japan

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Thirty-one former Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) workers to Japan gathered in St. Paul July 24-27 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) work in that country.

The first 10 workers were sent to Japan in 1951. Since then, 71 workers have followed them. Their work has resulted in 14 Mennonite congregations on the island of Kyushu. Nine workers are currently in Japan with COM and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The anniversary celebration included historical reflections, personal updates and worship.—*Esther Patkau*

MBM worker's status in Nepal again in question

ELKHART, Ind.—Miriam Krantz's future in Nepal is once again uncertain. A Mennonite Board of Missions nutritionist since 1963, Krantz assumed she would retire in the country that has become her second home. But last year the Nepali government refused her work visa, saying "35 years in one organization in Nepal is enough." Krantz left the country but returned shortly after as a UNICEF consultant. That visa, however, expired in February. She has a tourist visa that will allow her to stay in Nepal until late October.—*MBM News Service*

Bluffton sets marks for contributions

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Donations to Bluffton College in the last fiscal year were $2.7 million, the most ever for a year without a capital campaign. Giving to the Bluffton College Fund, which supports operating costs, totaled $968,600, also a new high. Bluffton alumni accounted for 40 percent of all giving.

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Workers

Harder, Willmar, will begin Oct. 1 as pastor at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Krehbiel, Val, has begun as pastor at Salina (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Rheinheimer, Don, has resigned as conference minister for Rocky Mountain Conference, effective the end of this year.

Vargas, Blanca, will be a Spanish church planter in San Antonio, Texas.

Zimmerman, John, on July 1 completed a five-year pastorate at Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Births

Brinkerhoff, Cierra Grace, July 1, to Amy and Jeff Brinkerhoff, Goshen, Ind..

Buttermore, Grace Irene, June 21, to Andy and April (Epp) Buttermore, Lincoln, Neb.

Chisolm, Jessica Ann, July 10, to Jason and Theresa (Ladnier) Chisolm, Meridian, Miss.

Detwiler, Colby Ryan, July 2, to Kerry and Melissa Detwiler, Harleysville, Pa.

Friesen, Joshua Randall, July 19, to Brent and Natalie (Richter) Friesen, Lincoln, Neb.

North-Sandel, Henry Jang, Jan. 25, received for adoption May 26 by Emily North and Ben Sandel, Takoma Park, Md.

Thiessen, Kiara Skye, July 17, to Mark and Sharleen (Plett) Thiessen, Altona, Man.

Marriages

Friesen/Hiebner: Stephani Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and David Hiebner, Henderson, July 28 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Hershberger/Lowry: Glenna Hershberger, Morgantown, Pa., and Stephen Lowry, Topeka, Kan., June 30 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Johnston/Mast: Marie Johnston, Kidron, Ohio, and Joseph Mast, Millersburg, Ohio, July 21 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

King/Moyer: David King, Archbold, Ohio, and Michelle Moyer, Tigard, Ore., June 9 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Murphy/Swartzentruber: Robert Murphy, Omaha, Neb., and Jana Swartzentruber, Kidron, Ohio, July 7 at West Hills Presbyterian Church, Omaha.

Rafferty/Troyer: Jim Rafferty, Uniontown, Ohio, and Michelle Troyer, Hartville, Ohio, July 28 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Derstine, Florence D., 89, Souderton, Pa., died June 26. Spouse: Linford Derstine (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Lizzie Rice (deceased). Survivors: children Ferril, Louise Histand, Sonja Moyer; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Hartzler, John, 85, Goshen, Ind., died July 14 of heart failure. Spouse: Catherine Fisher Hartman. Parents: Simon and Magdalene Beuter Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Earnest, Lewis, Floyd, Kenneth, Wayne, Juanita, Laveta Randall, Vivian Hunt; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: July 17 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Jantzi, Annie, 89, Stratford, Ont., died July 20. Parents: Michael and Barbara Gerber Jantzi (deceased). Funeral: July 24 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Kennedy, Adele J.Chaffee, 40, Wauseon, Ohio, died July 28 of cancer. Spouse: Mark Kennedy. Parents: Lloyd (deceased) and Minnie Chaffee. Other survivors: children Matthew, Samantha. Funeral: Aug. 1 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Landis, Elias (J.R.) Alderfer, 66, Harleysville, Pa., died June 10. Spouse: Glenda Landis. Other survivors: children Kevin, Sally Derstine, Janet Blum; six grandchildren. Funeral: June 13 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Lehman, Daniel S., 69, New Bremen, N.Y., died July 17. Spouse: Florence Zehr Lehman. Parents: Benjamin and Bertha Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: children Perry, Mark, Sheryl Nespor, Sue Roggie, Cynthia Lapp; nine grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at Lowville (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Schroeder, Diedrich J., 88, Winkler, Man., died July 7. Spouse: Helena Schroeder. Parents: Johann and Susana Schroeder (deceased). Other survivors: children Marlene Wiens, Dennis, Randy, six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 13 at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Swartley, Paul R., 87, Towamencin (Pa.) Township, died July 24. Spouse: Eva Swartley. Other survivors: children Arlene Wambold, Richard, Jean Rodenberg, John; three grandchildren. Funeral: July 27 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Troyer, M. Raymond, 88, Goshen, Ind., died July 23. Spouse: Kathryn Hartzler Troyer. Parents: N.E. and Eva Allgyer Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Betty Hartzler, Janet Yordy, Dennis, David, Norman; 16 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funerals: July 26 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen; July 28 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

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- **Locust Grove Mennonite Church** has for sale ***34 used church pews***. Thirty are 17 feet, two are 16 feet, two are 12 feet. They have padded seats and wood backs. Call 717-935-2164 or email <locustgrovemc@juno.com>; Locust Grove Mennonite Church, 3358 W. Main St., Belleville, PA 17004.

- **Salem Mennonite Church**, Salem, Ore., has an opening for a 1/4-time (FTE) ***youth ministry leader*** starting Sept. 2001. Position open until filled.

  Please contact Salem Mennonite Church, 503-390-2715; email <newswanger2@home.com>.

- **Oak Grove Mennonite Church**, Smithville, Ohio, a rural congregation with approximately 230 active resident members, is seeking an ***associate pastor***. Responsibilities will include preaching, visitation and administration with an emphasis on ministry to youth, young adults and young families.

  If you are feeling God's leading, send letter or resume to Morris Stutzman, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, 7843 Smucker Road, Smithville, OH 44677; email <mstutzman@lhslaw.com>.

- **Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions Inc.** is seeking a person to serve as ***president***. This individual will be responsible for the VMBM mission program. Qualifications include: devoted Anabaptist follower of Christ, commitment to Virginia Mennonite Conference leadership and congregations, administrative gifts, understanding of fiscal and budget management, resource development, skills in communications and personal relationships. Available to begin: summer 2002. Resumes will be accepted through Sept. 30 or until position is filled.

  Contact Lois Maust, 901 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, for more information.

- **Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust**, Philadelphia, seeks full-time ***executive director*** with skills in development and fund raising. GMHT owns and manages the historic Germantown Mennonite Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, built in 1770. Priority first three years focuses on enlarging our donor base and fund raising. Qualifications: strong interest in and knowledge of Mennonite history and heritage, possess fund-raising and development skills, training and/or experience in related fields. Must have good people skills, administrative ability, able to supervise staff.

  Send resume to Lamont Woelk, GMHT Search Committee, P.O. Box 448, Richlandtown, PA 18955-0448; 215-538-1452.

- **Hesston College** seeks a ***director of campus facilities*** to coordinate and direct the planning, design, construction, maintenance and renovation of buildings, grounds, equipment and other facilities. Duties and responsibilities of the director are to provide positive leadership for an existing, highly skilled, quality- and efficiency-minded staff; lead departmental planning; oversee maintenance, repair and construction of facilities; work with off-site contacts; coordinate campus safety and security efforts. The director manages subordinate supervisors in the department. The qualified candidate should have a bachelor's degree or 4+ years of progressively responsible related experience. Communication, mathematical, reasoning and computer skills are required. The individual should also demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education.

  Contact Wendell Sauder, executive vice president for planning and resources, 620-327-8217; <wendells@hesston.edu>.

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by Gordon Houser

Summer is when Hollywood rolls out its blockbusters, geared mostly for young people—particularly males—out of school and looking for mindless entertainment.

This summer has brought audiences a plethora of bad movies that both reflect and reinforce a dangerous cultural trend. That trend is simplistic mindlessness.

Among the more popular films from the past several months was *Pearl Harbor*, an exercise in jingoism. The theater where I saw it even had a color guard march in and stand at attention while the national anthem played. Then we watched an improbable love story, patriotic pabulum and a demonization of the enemy. Yet like most summer movies, this one had no higher purpose than making a profit.

For the kids there was *Shrek*, which offers a different spin on the typical fairy tale and questions our obsession with beauty. But it also presents a mean-spirited attack on Disney (for example, an exploding bluebird refers to a scene from Disney's *Snow White*), reflecting an insider feud between producers.

The latest box office leader, *Planet of the Apes*, is a remake of the 1967 film. Director Tim Burton includes updated special effects, and the actors playing the apes are better trained in ape behavior, but this new one lacks the original's drama, suspense, emotion and intelligence.

A.I. (artificial intelligence), which Steven Spielberg finished after Stanley Kubrick died, is perhaps the most artistic of American films this summer, as it does some interesting things visually. But the story it tells is implausible and in the end anti-human.

Final Fantasy at least offers a message of overcoming conflict through understanding rather than violence. But its preachy, new age story feels as unreal as its almost-but-not-quite-real animation. The screenplay is atrocious.

Intelligence, storytelling and complex characters are mostly missing from these flicks. The exceptions tend to come from overseas. *The Widow of St. Pierre* tells of a strong-willed woman who defends a man sentenced to death in a 19th-century French settlement in Canada. Her army officer husband supports her. The film raises an important issue—capital punishment—while presenting complex characters.

Ratcatcher, a Scottish film from last year that only played in larger cities, portrays a boy in a poor section of Glasgow. We get to know and care for the world portrayed here.

Movies should engage our minds and hearts. Too few do. And too many of us accept it.

books

The Death of Adam: Essays on Modern Thought by Marilynne Robinson (Mariner Books, 2000, $14) is a thought-provoking collection of essays that challenges many cultural assumptions and offers fresh interpretations of topics as diverse as Darwinism, John Calvin, the McGuffey Readers, Puritans and environmentalism. Robinson argues, for example, that the origins of Darwinism are more social and political than scientific, that it "is another faith—a loyalty to a vision of the nature of things despite its inaccessibility to demonstration." In "Facing Reality" she writes that our society's collective fiction "is full of anxiety, empty of humor and generosity." In a telling metaphor, she writes, "It is as if we took morphine to help us sleep on a bed of nails." In "Wilderness" she warns that we are "approaching the end of the day" if we do not change. She writes, "Unless we can establish peace and order as values, and learn to see our own well-being in our neighbor's prosperity, we can do nothing at all for the rain forests and the koala bears." This is a powerful, necessary book.

videos

Shroud for a Journey: The Clayton Kratz Story is produced by Sidney King, Tim Kennel, Peter Scott and Katherine Lemons, who as Goshen (Ind.) College students traveled to Russia, retracing the steps of Kratz, a Mennonite Central Committee worker who disappeared in Russia in 1920 while trying to help Mennonites in desperate need. The historical footage and the interview with a woman who lived through that period in Russia are riveting. The film works well when it sticks with the story but strays when the students offer comments that give little insight to viewers. This 36-minute video could be cut to 30 minutes and be more focused. Still, it is a story Mennonite congregations need to hear, and this format will be more accessible to many. It costs $20 and may be ordered from 4844 16th St. Drive NE, Hickory, NC 28601.

42 and Up (not rated) may be difficult to find (I rented it through Facets, <rentals@facets.org>), but it's worth a look. This British documentary series started in 1965 with *7 and Up*. It follows the lives of a group of British children from various backgrounds, beginning when they are 7 years old, then updates their lives every seven years. Watching how they change is balanced by the continuity with who they were as children. This fascinating film leads viewers to reflect on their own lives.

music

JD Martin (a.k.a. Jerry Derstine) has released a CD of two of his songs: "Unity" and "Jesus, Rock of Ages" (#515 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*). He performs each song three times (including singalong tracks), with and without harmony vocals by Ester Nicholson and Jan Garrett. Each song is simply and beautifully rendered, and the production quality is high. However, many listeners will want more songs for their money. The cost is $10, plus $2 shipping. Order from JD Martin, 5906 Cantaloupe Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91401; 818-781-6240; <jd@jdmartin.ws>.

What Might Have Been is Mennonite pastor Chuck Neufeld's latest CD of folk music. Most of the songs here are personal, with few social justice pieces, which are part of his other works. Perhaps it's a reflection of his becoming a grandfather. It's a quieter CD as well, with lovely pieces, such as "I Got You" and "You Are All There Is." Bob Dylan remains a strong influence, with hints of Bruce Cockburn. Neufeld also adds other instruments than guitar and piano on a few songs ("No Road Left" and "Almost Everything"). The cost is $15. Order from Chuck Neufeld, 3316 W. 163rd, Markham, IL 60426.

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Everett J. Thomas

Stuffing a camel through the eye of a needle

For God all things are possible.—Mark 10:27b

Sometimes we Mennonites claim that simple living is a characteristic that makes us distinct from other Christians. Indeed, Article 21 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective calls us to "live simply, practice mutual aid within the church, uphold economic justice, and give generously and cheerfully."

However, we would be hard pressed to show that we all live more simply and spend less money on ourselves than our neighbors who go to other churches.

We are rich. We are the wealthy whom Jesus described in Mark 10:17-31, where he said it would be easier for a camel to fit through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to get into heaven (v. 25). But Jesus did not end his lesson with such a curse. When the disciples, who had forsaken everything to follow Jesus, replied in astonishment, "Then who can be saved?" (v. 26), Jesus explained that God's grace extends even to rich people. Many of us need this grace.

The signs of our wealth extend beyond our homes, the vehicles we drive and the vacations we take. Indicators of our affluence are everywhere, including the way we do church. For example, more and more congregations are taking on large mortgages to build expensive facilities for worship, fellowship, Christian education and recreation. Even the way we gather for our national assemblies has changed. In July, we met at the opulent Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn., which bills itself as the largest noncasino hotel under one roof in this country. When I was at Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, I helped choose this location. We knew that such a luxurious facility would attract more of our church members. It did, and Nashville 2001 set a record for the largest gathering ever of U.S. Mennonites.

Our wealth leaves us with heavy responsibilities to influence the culture and times in which we live, and bring justice to those who have been disadvantaged.

As the gap between rich and poor grows around the world, most of us in what will become Mennonite Church USA are on the rich side of the divide. French Mennonite Frederick de Coninck (see page 4) addresses us with a fresh reminder of an Old Testament plan to bring justice to such disparities. He explains that the call to Jubilee ensured equality to all by giving opportunity back to each person.

Tim Stair, a member of the pastoral team at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., recently challenged our congregation to consider a deliberate step of Jubilee. Tim's suggestion: on the 50th anniversary of our baptism (the Jubilee year) calculate the value of our homes, compare it to the median value of homes in our community, and give away half the difference to an agency such as Habitat for Humanity.

Such a suggestion addresses us individually. Other programs provide such sharing through denominational structures. For example, the Global Gift Sharing Project managed by Mennonite World Conference provides a safe and efficient way for member churches to share their wealth with MWC sisters and brothers in the global South.

Clearly, such Jubilee impulses indicate that within our wealth we do carry sensitivities about money and justice. The danger, however, is that we will put our trust in our wealth, assuage our guilt by giving away a little of our excess or play with it in our fund-raisers (see page 6).

But when we incorporate Jubilee principles into the management of our wealth, we also help create a world that is a bit more just and fair to those with few resources.

Many of us are wealthy. God's grace also covers us who are rich. But it is not a cheap grace. Our wealth leaves us with heavy responsibilities to influence the culture and times in which we live, and bring justice to those who have been disadvantaged by birth, circumstance or economic systems.

Jesus assures us that while it may not be possible for us to stuff a camel through the eye of a needle, God can.—*ejt*

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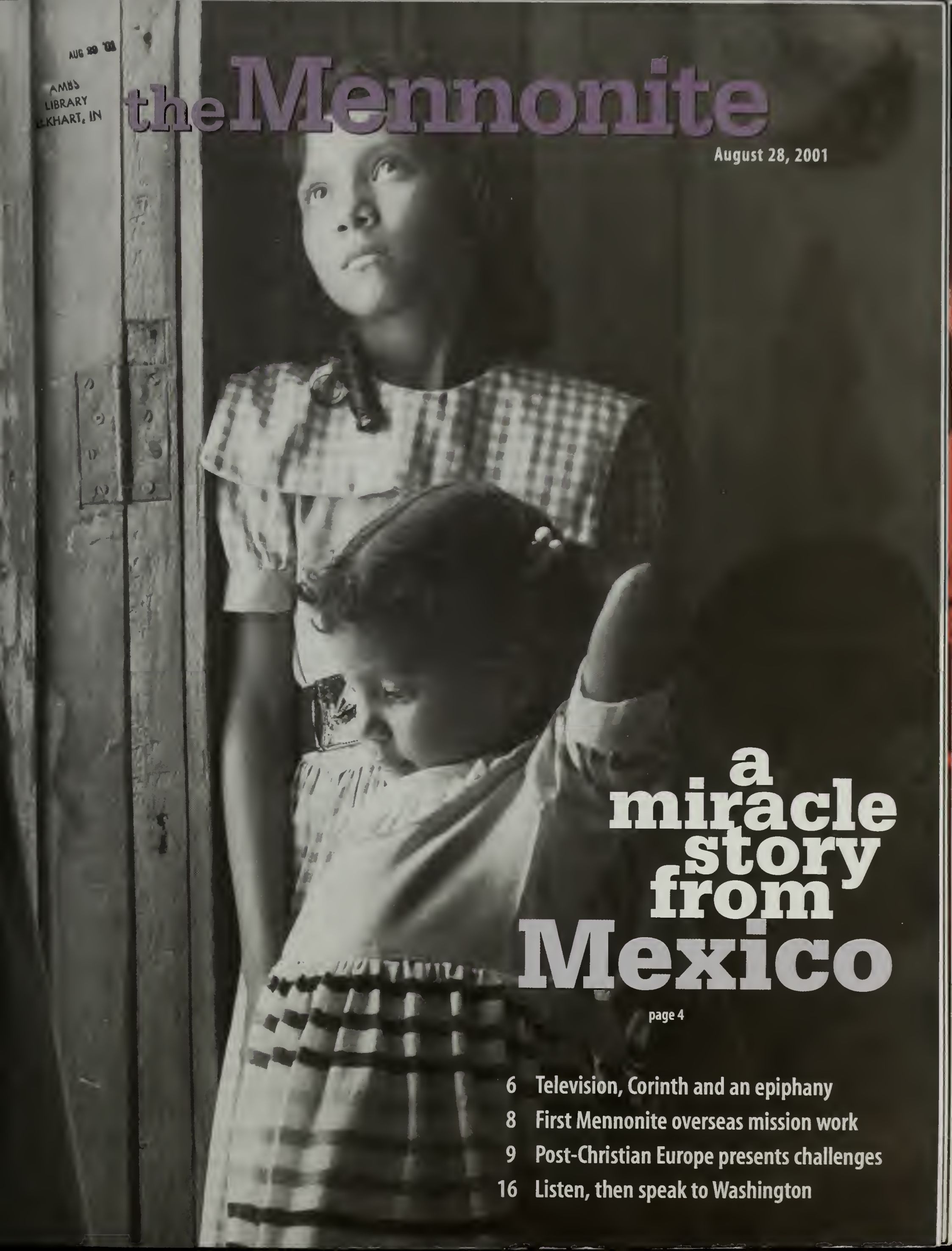

a miracle story from Mexico

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Politically correct decision

I can only say one thing about the resolutions passed on Saturday morning, July 7, at Nashville, Tenn., by Mennonite Church USA: Shame on you. You had a wonderful opportunity to show the world that we Mennonites are solidly for life, peace and justice, and you blew it.

A group of approximately 60 had signed a resolution to send to our federal government condemning capital punishment. The powers that be brought the resolution before the assembly for the delegates to approve. But before it was acted upon, there was an opportunity to address the group from the floor. One woman called to our attention the fact that there was a very obvious omission. She pointed out that by adding a few words condemning abortion we could also express our support for life, peace and justice by including our abhorrence for the violence done to unborn babies.

After a short recess called for by a delegate, the resolutions committee did the cop-out thing, to the relief of those who support political correctness. Instead of adding the word "abortion" as needed to the resolution as suggested or drafting a second resolution, the committee decided to table the motion.

It is to our own shame that we were really gung ho to save the lives of 84 condemned criminals (most of whom are guilty) who were executed this year, but we were unable to take a stand for life and condemn the violence and injustice done to the 1.5 million lives of innocent, helpless babies each year. We really blew that "teaching position," didn't we?—*Wilmer Sprunger, Berne, Ind.*

I am appalled that the Nashville convention refused to pass a statement against the killing of babies. Why did the convention refuse to make a statement on this vital issue? Yes, I know, there was a statement made 20 years ago regarding this issue. However, it appears to me the convention didn't want to reaffirm this or come out with a more forceful statement. We have no problems with speaking out regarding the death penalty, but let's not make waves on the abortion issue. How ironic when the comparison of number of deaths in abortion and death sentences is similar to the height of a skyscraper and an anthill. Could it be that it's just not politically correct? I fear for the future of our church when we refuse to call sin a sin. Let us be faithful to what the Scriptures teach and let the words fall where they may.—*Ruby Nissley, LaJara, Colo.*

Stranger at home

Having lived more than 13 years in Zaire and Haiti, I was troubled by Tobin Miller Shearer's "Fake Latinos" (Jan. 9) and "Following Fake Latinos" (May 1). I continued to be unsettled by some of the responses to those articles. When I read Carolyn Yoder's "Another Perspective on 'Fake Latinos' " (Speaking Out, Aug. 7), I felt she spoke for me.

Is there any doubt that upon returning from another culture, many experience pain and confusion as they attempt to understand how to fit back into North American culture? It is uncomfortable to feel like a stranger at "home" in your own family of faith. I sense a unique kinship among those who experience walking in joy and suffering with people from cultures other than their own. An Anabaptist way of life encourages that kind of empathy and compassion.

Knowing a little about how Shearer's experiences have deeply transformed his life, I am disappointed that he judges others' responses to their cross-cultural experiences so harshly. I hope this dialogue gives voice and substance to many who serve faithfully in Mennonite Central Committee and in various Mennonite missions and whose eyes were opened only to succumb to pressures to conform when they return to their home communities. These could be germinating sprouts in a truly missional church.—*Eldon Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.*

Fed up

I was greatly disappointed to see the generous amount of space allotted to the making of yet another cookbook, of yet another Mennonite cookbook, in the Aug. 7 issue ("Not by Bread Alone"). In this day and age of ever increasing obesity, both in adults and children, with all its accompanying health problems, the church should take a different road and deemphasize our focus on food. Leave the recipes to *Good Housekeeping* and have *The Mennonite* fill our souls rather than our stomachs.—*Nel Kopp, State College, Pa.*

Fighting for peace

Neither I nor my children were born or raised in the Mennonite church. But we have come to live in a wonderful congregation that shows great concern for mission. But our intent is sometimes bigger than our concepts.

The reason I write this is that my two sons have declared their intent to serve in the U.S. Air Force instead of committing to voluntary service. They stand firm in the belief that to

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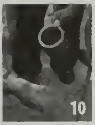
Vol. 4, No. 32, August 28, 2001



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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

readers say

preserve the freedom of faith there must be those who are willing to commit themselves as representatives of Christian discipleship toward the protection of such freedoms. They believe the discipleship of love, forgiveness, peace and understanding in the service can lead the world toward righteousness as well as foreign mission.

Through their declaration, the pacifist nature of our congregation raised its head. My younger son was subject to such ridicule that he left our congregation. His stature as a Christian was so abused by peace-minded, God-loving individuals who saw only the single dimension of Christian service that he chose to worship elsewhere. He found those who would accept his decision and his commitment and support him through their prayers outside the Mennonite community. My elder son has just graduated from college and attended an out-of-town congregation during the duration of his schooling and has not been subject to this ridicule.

Why do we mislead our young in the church to believe that service through peaceable means excludes any type of military service? In Mark 12:28-31 we are given the two greatestscommandments: Love God above all else and love our neighbors as ourselves. My sons stand firm in both of these beliefs, but what about those who chastise them?

We as concerned, committed Christians must take a stand to overcome the blight of complacency toward actions of the worldly and preserve the interests of Christian fervor. We must stand fast in the knowledge of the world outside our comfort zones. We must stand fast in the community of mission. We must stand fast in the understanding of peace. Peace at all costs? No, peace with honor and understanding.—*Raymond C. Collins, Goshen, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

A Mexican miracle

A pastor returns to Mexico and hears of the healing power of Christ.

by Raul Tadeo

In September 1999, I returned to northwest Mexico, where I had served as a missionary for 23 years, to make plans for a marriage enrichment event. When I arrived, I was surprised to hear that I would be staying at the Lugo family house.

The Lugo family was one of the families of Los Suarez with whom we were not able to make friends or share the gospel. Many of the village people had worked for them. The eight children all worked for their father, Don Ramon, until they left to get an education. Then most came home to help run the business. Their fiestas were large, and no local people were invited; only government officials and wealthy families of other villages, towns and cities attended. The people of the village watched from a distance.

The Lugo family was rich, and everyone else was poor. A number of the Lugo family were killed in auto accidents while speeding down some road in a state of drunkenness. Their riches caused more harm than good to their family.

Where did the Tadeos fit in? We were not part of the rich. And because we were evangelicals ("hermanos, aleluyas") and foreigners, we did not fit in with the poor.

As I traveled to their house, I asked myself, Who of our church people had such good connections with this family? Why are they sending me to the Lugo home when there are plenty of church people I know in that village? What kind of a welcome will I get in the Lugo home?

As I traveled to their house, I asked myself, Who of our church people had such good connections with this family?

I did not have trouble finding the house. I had passed it many times while visiting and giving tracts to the villages around the Lugo home. I had prayed for a chance to make friends with them, but that never happened. I pulled up in front of an attractive, well-built, well-lit house. It was so different from the brick and mud houses that surrounded it. There was no mistake that I was at the right house.

Upper-class people: Inside, Julio and Norma Lugo received me with hugs, in the manner that Mexican friends and "hermanos" (brothers) greet each other. Julio is the youngest of the Lugo brothers and sisters. He and Norma are now members of Los Suarez Mennonite Church and worship with the "hermanos, aleluyas." They told me they were baptized nine months earlier. They love the Lord and

Correction: Author Carolyn Yoder (Aug. 7 issue, page 19) did not serve three years in Jordan with Mennonite Central Committee.

The group sang about the saving power of Christ and all could see how this power had worked in the life of Julio Lugo.

serve him by witnessing to the upper-class people who make up their friends from the past. Already they have led one family of friends to the Lord. Each evening, after running around to the churches, they shared with me more of their story and about the miracles that have taken place in their lives.

Early in his life, Julio became addicted to drugs and alcohol. He had the money to support such a habit because he had wealthy parents. He went from bad to worse as he grew older. Then he stole things from the family business, parts of equipment and tools, to support his addiction. One day Don Ramon decided to tell his wife that Julio was an incurable drug and alcohol addict.

Julio told me this information so shocked his mother that she had a heart attack and died. He carries the guilt with him to this day. But his guilt pushed him further into drugs. The family tried to help Julio by sending him to a rehabilitation center in Guadalajara, where wealthy and famous people go to get help. He came home uncured. They learned that all the money in the world could not help Julio.

Unaware of—or blinded to—Julio's addictions, Norma married him, and they had two children. Early in the marriage, Julio tried to control his drug use. He wanted to leave his addiction for the sake of the children, but he had no success.

Powerless: Efren Ruiz, pastor of Los Suarez, knew of Julio's struggle and shared the gospel with him. Efren said he felt sorry for Julio. Many times he went to Julio's house and found him in some corner of his property crying like a baby. Julio hated the life he was living and the misery he brought to his wife and children. He knew he was a slave to his addiction, but he was powerless to change his life.

While Julio struggled, Norma cried often over their situation. Her housemaid, Juana, is a member of the local Mennonite church. She saw Norma's suffering and spoke to her about God and said there was hope for them through Christ.

The home has been transformed.

Thanks to the power of their faith, their lives have been transformed. They started attending worship services in the village church and eventually surrendered their lives to the Lord. Julio, with God's help, has been living free from his old life and is now living a new life in Christ.

Dividing wall: How blessed I felt as I joined the group to worship one evening during my short visit. What a beautiful sight to see barriers broken down between the rich and the poor of the village. A visitor could not tell who was who. Christ has broken down the dividing wall between Julio's wealthy family and the others who are considered poor. The group sang about the saving power of Christ and all could see how this power had worked in the life of Julio Lugo.

For a week I slept at the Lugo house and learned more and more details about the miraculous transformation of a man named Julio Cesar Lugo. He had all the money he wanted but could not enjoy it because he did not have the One who really can make us happy, Jesus Christ.

Raul Tadeo is pastor of Salem Mennonite Church, Wooster, Ohio.

And now they are pastors

What a blessing it was for me to return to northwest Mexico and see what a marvelous work God was doing! At Los Suarez Mennonite Church, Efren Ruiz, the pastor, led the service. He was converted to Christ when we lived in Los Suarez. He had been a drunkard, a woman chaser and a hot-tempered man. Now he is a pastor.

I also visited in San Lorenzo with the pastor there, Hector Ramon Ruiz. He had lived not far from our house in Los Suarez. He had been converted from an addiction to drugs. Now he, too, is a pastor.

I visited the church in Tabelojeca. I talked with Agustin Suarez, who became a Christian in Los Suarez. He had been our neighbor, had lived in a mud house with a roof that needed repairs. Instead of spending money on house repairs or furniture or clothing for his family, he spent most of his money on alcohol. Now he is the pastor of Tabelojeca Mennonite Church.

I attended a worship service in Ahome. The pastor of Ahome Mennonite Church is Agustin Suarez Jr. His father Agustin (mentioned above), after his conversion, did all he could to educate his children.

I visited the church in Ciudad Obregon, Sonora. The pastor there is Manuel Ruiz, who was converted in Los Suarez. He was an intelligent teenager who did not fit in with the other young people of the village. He told me he had once contemplated suicide. Now he is the pastor of Sochiloa Mennonite Church.

On April 24, 1968, James Roth, one of the early Mennonite missionaries to northwest Mexico, wrote me in a letter: "The other day we were suddenly reminded of you as we were meditating on the need for more workers for the Lord's harvest field here in Mexico. We have no idea what your plans are for the future [or] what right we have to ask you. ... Would you think it impossible to consider serving the Lord in Mexico in the future?"

What if we had said: "No, we don't feel like going to a foreign country. We like it in the United States." We did not.—*Raul Tadeo*

Television, Corinth and an epiphany

A visit to Greece leads to reflections on the distortions of television.

by Amanda Y. Short

Kate, Naomi, Lucas, Ethan and I bumbled off the bus. Our legs, bags and Ethan's cast became ensnarled in fingers, feet and a piece of pink Bazooka chewing gum stuck to the back of a bus seat. We laughed out of excitement and joy, and comments circled our little posse about how glorious it was to be free from our fellow Brethren Colleges Abroad student travelers for the rest of the weekend. Time was ours to eat, spend and ignore for two delicious days.

Television is a mind-filler for all those people made of nothing—for all those couples afraid to be alone together.

We meandered along the slender cobblestone streets of Corinth—the city of corruption, according to the apostle Paul—in search of lodging. Ethan's broken ankle and cast reduced our quest to the speed of a baby and our search radius to a minimum. In the end, we selected a tall, brownish hotel—room complete with five single, brown-sheeted beds against one wall and a remote control but no TV.

It felt as if life did not revolve around pictures of the real but that reality just was. I could feel the life around me—there was no cheapened version removed from existence by a screen.

Television is for all those dysfunctional families so they can pretend they are normal.

We feasted that first night at Everest, the Greek version of McDonald's, which served flavorsome food (not processed burgers). The red Coca-Cola umbrella above our table sheltered us from the night sky. Far from the buzz and speed of life in the United States, our words were unhurried, languid, not needing to be efficient or budgeted into a time slot.

The pungent garlic-onion smell of the "sluvakies" we had ordered tantalized our senses, challenging us to inhale these scrumptious wraps without chewing. The roasted chicken and tangy yogurt sauce stuffed in the olive oil-fried pitas seemed mixed with the pure life that filled the air, making our mouths water with delight.

Naomi, wishing to participate in an age-old Greek tradition, placed her coffee mug upside-down on her saucer in hopes that the leftover grounds would form a pattern and a readable fortune. The waiter seemed surprised we even knew about such things and proceeded to tell Naomi his version of her fortune.

"W-e-e-l-l, your lucky number is 5. And I see two snakes coming to meet each other. They are fighting. This means you will have two lovers who will fight over you. And yes, I see a letter of the alphabet—what is your name?" After Naomi replied truthfully, he continued, "Yes, I knew it started with 'N'—that was the letter that I saw in your cup."

Perhaps he simply wanted to find out what Naomi was doing after supper and if she had a significant other and, if she did, would she mind cheating on him. In fact, she had a significant other and happened to mind, so we left the waiter with only our money and a wistful face.

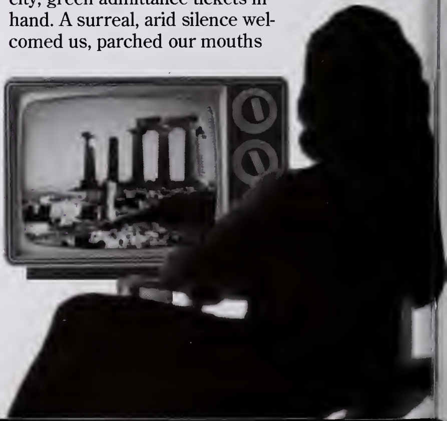
Television is for people who are afraid to love anything real.

We sauntered down to the waterfront, where the Ionian Sea welcomed us with the age-old sound of booming waves. The smell of salt and caught fish hung in the air like heat in a jungle. We positioned ourselves on some accommodating rocks and sat in the starlight, watching the robust sea declare war on the wharf. The food, the people, the stars, the water—it felt as if life did not revolve around pictures of the real but that reality just was. I could feel life around me—there was no cheapened version removed from existence by a screen.

Television depletes time.

Our plan had been to wake early and catch the first bus to ancient Corinth. Instead we woke and lumbered about the room until around noon, groaning and grunting. Finally our tired bodies forced themselves down the block to the bus station, making it in time to catch the one o'clock bus that took us 25 minutes north to the ruins of the ancient city.

Paying the 600 Greek drachmas, we entered the remains of that elaborate city, green admittance tickets in hand. A surreal, arid silence welcomed us, parched our mouths



and made our eyes water. We were afraid to move, horrified that the noise of our movement might shatter the existence of this place lost to the progression of time.

Timidly, as if entering a holy place, we advanced toward a small, covered, stone building. Inside we discovered a partially intact fresco of a woman poised on a stool, its reds and yellows taunting us to touch it. We sat on the floor and surveyed the city—the cobblestone streets and rows of shops, the temple that loomed above the world and the public bath sunk deep into the earth.

Ethan opened his black-bound Bible and read: "Paul's first letter to the Corinthians: From Paul, who by the will of God was called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. ... To the church of God which is in Corinth, to all who are called to be God's people ... together with all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace."

Two-thousand-year-old voices came rolling down around my ears—wooden cart wheels creaked, dogs barked, vendors bellowed, women wove in and out of the general hubbub, baskets balanced on their heads. My mind oscillated between two worlds, two times, two lives. I was lost in a postcard, a photo, a vacuum, time. I was adrift in the world and its existence and the serenity and timelessness of this place.

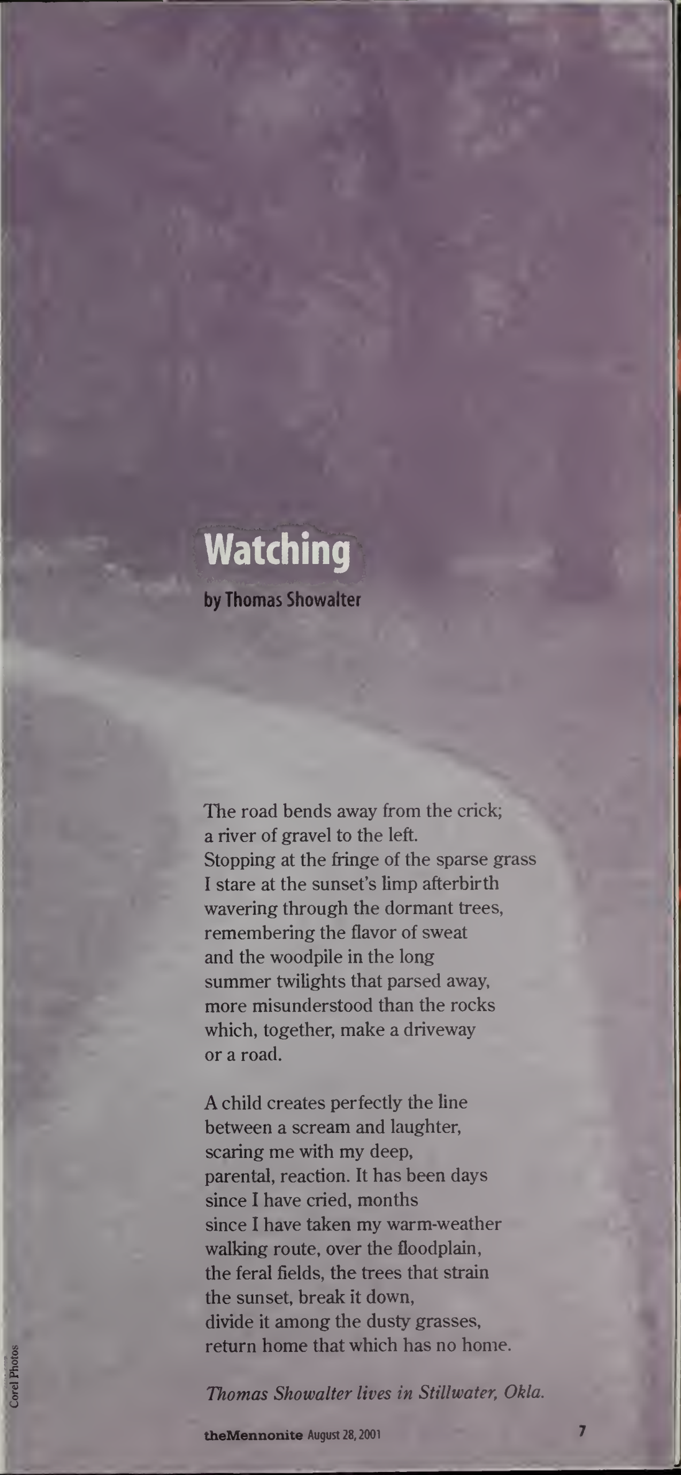
The raw voice of a tour guide hacked through the silence and the journey my mind had been taking: "And here in front of me, you will see what was once the entrance to the city. It is thought there was a huge stone arch that served as a sort of gateway."

Television distorts the real—life becomes a series of pictures.

I stare now at my scrapbook; the flat, soulless black and white photographs prompt my attempt to bring back that feeling of space, time and life. I long to taste again the 2,000-year-old air or hear the rush of water hidden below the public bath. I yearn to find some other place that feels concrete, that is not a copy of a copy or an image posing as reality.

I have decided that I hate television.

Amanda Y. Short is a student at Goshen (Ind.) College.



Corel Photos

Watching

by Thomas Showalter

The road bends away from the crick;
a river of gravel to the left.
Stopping at the fringe of the sparse grass
I stare at the sunset's limp afterbirth
wavering through the dormant trees,
remembering the flavor of sweat
and the woodpile in the long
summer twilights that parsed away,
more misunderstood than the rocks
which, together, make a driveway
or a road.

A child creates perfectly the line
between a scream and laughter,
scaring me with my deep,
parental, reaction. It has been days
since I have cried, months
since I have taken my warm-weather
walking route, over the floodplain,
the feral fields, the trees that strain
the sunset, break it down,
divide it among the dusty grasses,
return home that which has no home.

Thomas Showalter lives in Stillwater, Okla.

Indonesian church born in Philadelphia

About a year and a half ago, Truong Tu, pastor of Abundant Life Chinese Church in Philadelphia, noticed Indonesian newcomers swelling attendance in his congregation, which is a member of Lancaster Conference.

To help meet the Indonesians' needs, Tu first tried translating his Mandarin services into their native language. But as their numbers continued to grow, another solution was needed. After consulting with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM), Tu started an Indonesian fellowship, which meets Sunday afternoons in the Abundant Life building.

Forty to 50 Indonesians, most of them ethnic Chinese with nominal Christian backgrounds, attend.

"This fellowship happened without trying," says Leonard Burkholder, EMM staff member for language group development, who notes that Philadelphia is home to the fastest growing Indonesian community in the United States.—*EMM News Service*

MCC photo by Lawrence Yoder

A choir and instrumentalists from Lampir Meijen Church, a Mennonite congregation in Semarang, Indonesia, perform during a July 26-28 celebration of the first Mennonite overseas missionaries. Pieter and Wilhelmina Jansz arrived in Indonesia from the Netherlands in 1851. Today Indonesia has the fifth largest Mennonite membership of any country in the world.

Indonesian celebration marks 150th anniversary of first Mennonite overseas mission endeavor

JEPARA, Indonesia—By declaring themselves a missional church, Mennonite Church USA is carrying on a tradition started by Dutch Mennonites a century and a half ago.

In November 1851, Pieter and Wilhelmina Jansz became the first Mennonite overseas mission workers when they arrived from the Netherlands in what is now Jakarta, Indonesia. In the ancient town of Jepara, where they later founded the first Mennonite congregation outside Europe and North America, Indonesian Mennonites recently celebrated 150 years since their coming.

The July 26-28 festivities were attended by nearly 200 Mennonites from the three Indonesian conferences stemming from the Dutch Mennonite work. Representatives from the Netherlands and North America also attended.

A tour of historic locations took participants to the site of the first indigenous congregation, early mission hospitals and the burial place of the Janszes, who remained in Indonesia for more than 50 years.

Speakers at the celebration included Alle Hoekema and Ed van Straten, former Dutch Mennonite missionaries who worked with Indonesian churches; Aristarkus Sukarto, a Mennonite and president of Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta; and Sigit Heru Soekotjo and Lawrence Yoder, Indonesian-church historians. Yoder is a missiologist at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., and former Indonesia country representative for Mennonite Central Committee.

The Dutch Mennonite Missionary Association was formed in 1847, which was also supported by Palatinate and Prussian congregations. Four years after the organization's founding, the Janszes were sent to the Indonesian island of Java, then a Dutch colony. Other Mennonites from the Netherlands joined them over the next dozen years, and in 1871, the first Russian Mennonite missionary arrived to serve on Sumatra.

Indonesia today has more than 87,000 church members—the fifth largest Mennonite population in the world—in three Mennonite conferences: GITJ, with 85 congregations and 65,000 members; GKMI, with 39 congregations and 16,000 members; and JKI, with 36 congregations and 6,500 members.—*MCC News Service*

Countries with the largest Mennonite memberships

1. United States—319,768
2. Democratic Republic of Congo—183,040
3. Canada—124,150
4. India—90,006
5. Indonesia—87,802

Source: Mennonite World Conference

Post-Christian Europe presents challenges for Mennonite mission and pastoral workers

BARCELONA, Spain—Walking through the streets of any European city, it is hard to miss the churches: vaulting stone arches of the cathedrals, small chapels in quaint mountain villages, bells tolling across the hills and plains. But, say European Mennonites, walk inside and it is hard to miss the fact that the churches are mostly empty.

In England, less than 10 percent of the population identifies itself as active Christian, and 75 percent of people younger than 25 have never stepped inside a church building. In Finland and Sweden, where state churches have been the norm for 400 years, the number of active Christians drops to 4 percent.

"The church is in decline," says Tim Foley, an elder at Woodgreen Mennonite Church in London. For the average Brit, he says, "there's no advantage whatsoever in becoming part of the church. It's one of those things that gets dropped off the list as things get busy."

Mark Thiessen Nation, a Mennonite theologian and program director at the London Mennonite Centre, cites a recent magazine article that states that many Europeans perceive Christianity as being as weird and wacky as atheism and vegetarianism were a generation ago.

"A number of people think they have a sense of what Christianity is about and think that it's boring or worse," Nation says.

Tom Rutschman, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in the village of Jokkmokk, Sweden, says the challenge of being a Christian witness in post-Christian Europe can especially be seen in the lives of youth. In 1980, when the small Free Church in Jokkmokk began a youth outreach program, there were no active Christian youth in the village.

"Twenty-five years ago, if you'd asked [kids in school] if they knew a Christian, they'd say no," Rutschman says. "If you asked what a Christian was like, they would tell you a person who has a lot of rules and couldn't do a lot of things."

Over the years, the outreach program has brought several dozen youth to faith, Rutschman says. But another challenge awaits them.

"Imagine what it is to be the only one in your class who is a Christian, to be made fun of because of that," he says.

Even in Spain, where European Mennonites gathered for their biennial colloquium July 28-Aug. 4, a post-Christian culture is a growing reality. "Spain has changed a lot in 20 years," says Jose Luis Suarez, pastor of Barcelona Mennonite Church.

Despite being a bastion of the Catholic Church for centuries, many Spaniards turned away from the church in the late 1970s because of its support for dictator Francisco Franco.

Now, Suarez says, "The church means nothing to the people. How do we share the gospel in a secular world when people have no reference points?"

Despite the lack of interest in Christian churches, Rutschman says, there is still a hunger for spirituality. "In the last 10 years, people are again talking about religious and spiritual needs, but they assume that the church has nothing for them," he says. "It's intelligent, educated people who are looking for answers in stones and exercises, who are willing to believe whatever."

To respond to this need, Foley believes it is important for churches in Europe to begin thinking in new ways that emphasize Bible studies and small groups. "Some of us see [small congregations] as something to embrace," he says. "We don't need the props, the large buildings to be church. Being a small church makes us depend more on God."

Nation believes Christians need to be sensitive to the lack of trust created by the traditional church methods but also to clearly state how their faith impacts their daily lives.

"We have to realize there is an apologetic task of convincing others that Christians are not despicable," he says. "But we also need to be up-front with our discernibly Christian convictions. We aren't interested in peace because it's a hobby of ours. We're interested because it's connected to our life in Christ.

"I think Anabaptists have something to offer in the midst of [a post-Christian society]. [We] can be a very strong witness because we believe that Christian beliefs are connected to a way of living."—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

Imagine what it is to be the only one in your class who is a Christian, to be made fun of because of that.

—*Tom Rutschman*

London Mennonite to develop short-term work

Tim Foley, an elder at Woodgreen Mennonite Church in London, hopes plans for short-term mission work in the United Kingdom and Ireland will provide an injection of hope in a post-Christian culture.

"There is the potential [for volunteers] to do a lot of good, to lay foundations for longer-term projects," he says.

Foley has been named by Mennonite Board of Missions to a half-time position to develop short-term mission opportunities for youth and young adults. They can include current programs such as Youth Venture as well as assignments for individuals for as long as one year. Placements may be with civil organizations and with churches.—*MBM News Service*

Anticipation of future with Mennonite Church USA prompts GC, MBM commemorations of their pasts

On a holiday weekend born out of commemoration of workers and their work, two church institutions will celebrate their years of labor and look ahead to the tasks ahead of them as part of Mennonite Church USA.

Mennonite Board of Missions will hold "Handing on the Legacy: Celebrating 120 Years of MBM, 1882-2002" with events scheduled for Sept. 1-2—Labor Day weekend—in Elkhart and Goshen, Ind. Also on Sept. 1, the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) will host an open house, banquet and program in Newton and North Newton, Kan. MBM and the General Conference Mennonite Church, two of the oldest U.S. Mennonite entities, will cease to exist on Feb. 1, 2002, when Mennonite Church USA comes into being.

The MBM event on Sept. 1 will feature reunions for mission workers, a golf outing, an open house of MBM offices in Elkhart and tours of local historic Mennonite sites. The day will conclude with a celebration banquet at Greencroft Senior Center in Goshen. The next afternoon's schedule includes a hog roast and mission festival at Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen. Activities will conclude with a commissioning service for the future of mission in Mennonite Church USA.

The GC event will observe 141 years of denominational history and the future as part of a new church with afternoon and evening activities. GC headquarters in downtown Newton—the denomination's central office since 1943—will be open for tours from 2 to 4 p.m. An appreciation banquet for current GC staff will be held in the evening, followed by a worship service at 7:30 p.m. at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton. The service will include singing and reflections.

MBM traces its beginnings to the Mennonite Evangelizing Committee, created in 1882 to support pastors visiting scattered congregations and members. The first home mission work started in 1893 in Chicago, and the first overseas mission work began in 1899 in India. The organization went through several name changes and became MBM in 1906, when it merged with Mennonite Board of Charitable Homes and Missions, which operated a children's home and old people's home in Ohio.

The General Conference Mennonite Church was created in 1860, when leaders from several independent Mennonite groups—most of them new arrivals to the United States—met in West Point, Iowa. The denomination consolidated its offices in 1943 in a donated building on Newton's Main Street, where GC headquarters have remained.

File photos (2)

Left: S.K. Kader, a leader in the Mennonite Church in India (right) assists Leroy Kauffman, president of Mennonite Board of Missions' board of directors, in planting a tree in Dhamtari, India, to commemorate the Indian church's centennial in 1999. India was MBM's first overseas mission location. Right: General Conference Mennonite Church headquarters in Newton, Kan., circa 1960. GC central offices have been at that location since 1943. MBM and the General Conference Mennonite Church will hold Labor Day-weekend celebrations as they prepare to become part of Mennonite Church USA next year.

School days return for MDS worker

At age 22, Karla Amstutz is going back to school this fall.

A Mennonite Disaster Service veteran (MDS), Amstutz is one of 25 scholarship recipients to study social entrepreneurship at Presbyterian-affiliated Sterling (Kan.) College. The program, a joint effort with Habitat for Humanity and the first of its kind in the nation, is designed to train leaders for nonprofit programs.

Amstutz will be pursuing a minor in social entrepreneurship while majoring in business administration.

"This is a chance to build on what God has given me so far and prepare for where God is leading next," she says.

A native of Iowa, Amstutz started MDS service in 1999 as a laborer in Mulhall, Okla., then moved on to Little Rock, Ark., where she was head cook. Last fall she became MDS's youngest project director ever when she assumed leadership of post-flood work in Apache, Okla.—*MDS News Service*

Absence of denominational peace statements filed with Selective Service not cause for concern

WASHINGTON—The discovery that most Anabaptist denominations—including the three traditional historic peace churches—don't have peace statements filed with the Selective Service generated concern earlier this year. But conscientious objectors (COs) to war should have a more pressing concern, say denominational peace leaders.

"The task for the church is to file our peace statements in the hearts and lives of our families, our congregations and our youth," says Titus Peachey, a Mennonite Central Committee U.S. staff member. "Our task is to file peace statements in the life of the communities and neighborhoods that surround our congregations."

Historically, denominational peace statements filed with the Selective Service have granted a presumption that CO applicants from those denominations qualify. A draftee from another denomination would probably have his CO application more closely scrutinized.

But in a meeting with the Center on Conscience and War, a peace advocacy organization, Selective Service representatives suggested that churches need not be overly concerned with filing their peace statements with the agency. The Selective Service is not soliciting peace statements from religious bodies. Representatives said such statements may be submitted to local draft boards in the event of a draft. Those statements now with the Selective Service will not be shared with local draft boards.

Selective Service representatives also said that conscientious objection is a matter of individual conscience, which may or may not be based on religious faith.

The only Anabaptists with peace statements filed with the Selective Service are the Brethren in Christ Church, Dunkard Brethren Church, Eastern Pennsylvania Mennonite Church, Hutterian Brethren, Mid-Atlantic Mennonite Fellowship, Old German Baptist Brethren, Pilgrim Mennonite Conference and Weaverland Conference Mennonite Churches.

"Passing on beliefs in peace to the next generation and living out these convictions in the present is the best approach to any draft in the future," says Peachey, a member of the Center on Conscience and War board. "Our lives and our communities will benefit, and if Selective Service should ever question our sincerity, we will have many witnesses."

The Center on Conscience and War was formed in 1940 as the National Service Board for Religious Objectors in order to carry the concerns of the historic peace churches to the U.S. government. The organization was renamed the National Interreligious Service Board for Concientious Objectors in 1969 and became the Center on Conscience and War last year.—*MCC News Service and* The Reporter for Conscience' Sake

> **Passing on beliefs in peace to the next generation and living out these convictions in the present is the best approach to any draft in the future.**
>
> —*Titus Peachey*

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this date in Mennonite history

Aug. 28, 1981—Mennonite Central Committee U.S. assumes ownership of the service program Sharing With Appalachian People, which previously had been co-sponsored with Mennonite Board of Missions.

Hurricane relief helps MCC bag volunteer

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Zeneyda Blandon describes herself as a pack rat. She can't throw away things, especially if they hold sentimental value. One such item is a tattered drawstring bag. It is the last remaining piece of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) health kit she received after Hurricane Juana decimated her village in Nicaragua in 1988.

"The bag doesn't make me sad because of the hurricane," she says. "It reminds me of my family and village."

Blandon, 25, has carried that bag halfway around the world and is now serving with the organization that gave it to her in the first place. She is an MCC worker in Bangladesh, visiting orphanages and schools to evaluate how MCC's resources are being used.

After the hurricane, Blandon was given the opportunity to continue her schooling in the capital city of Managua, where she lived with a Brethren in Christ minister. As a result, she met many mission and development workers. Blandon met and married Keith Poe, a son of missionaries, and together they entered MCC. *—MCC News Service*

Hydroelectric project all wet, Manitobans say

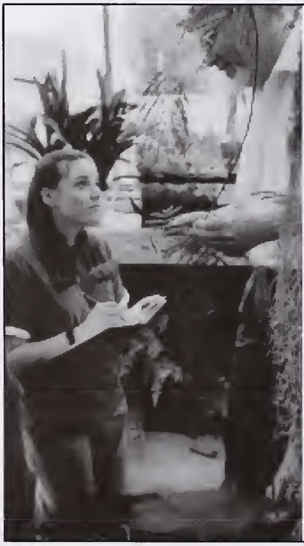
WINNIPEG—The cost of hydroelectric power in Manitoba is greater than the cost consumers are paying, say organizers of a movement including Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) Manitoba office.

MCC Manitoba and Consumers for Responsible Energy this summer launched The True Cost campaign, claiming that provincial power rates are the lowest on the continent largely because hydroelectric development has fouled the lands of northern indigenous peoples such as the Pimicikamak Cree Nation at Cross Lake. The True Cost is asking households to contribute a 10 percent "energy tax" on their monthly power bills. That amount will go to a Cross Lake community fund.

Cross Lake Cree elders say hydroelectric development has caused water pollution, shore erosion, disappearing islands and deaths from project-related accidents. *—Canadian Mennonite*

Hesston College sets another record for giving

HESSTON, Kan.—For the second year in a row, Hesston College saw record contributions to its annual fund. Giving for the 2000-2001 fiscal year reached $1.3 million, topping last year's $1.27 million. It was the fourth consecutive year that giving exceeded $1 million. "We are very grateful for the generosity of so many alumni and friends of Hesston College," says president Loren Swartzendruber.



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Events

Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind., 150th anniversary, Sept. 7-9. For information, contact the church at 219-682-4751; <Holdemanchurch@ juno.com>.

Casselman River Area Amish and Mennonite Historians meeting Sept. 14-15 at Cherry Glade Mennonite Church, Accident, Md. For information, contact The Casselman Historians, P.O. Box 591, Grantsville, MD 21536; 301-245-4326; <christior@juno.com>.

Zion Mennonite Church, Donnellson, Iowa, 150th anniversary, Oct. 14. For information and reservations, contact Zion Mennonite Church, 720 Park St., Donnellson, IA 52625, by Sept. 30.

Workers

Arnold, Janine, Newton, Kan., has been named manager of Provident Bookstore, Newton.

Cahill, Rob and Tara, Greencastle, Pa., are beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Guatemala as facilitators and coordinators at an education center.

Gingrich, Chris and Eileen, Harrisonburg, Va., are beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Nepal. Chris will be a micro credit facilitator.

Hart, Julie and Philip, Newton, Kan., are beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Guatemala. Julie will be an educational consultant and facilitator; Philip will be an administrative consultant.

Keim, Anna Beth, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in China teaching English.

King, Edith and John C., were installed June 10 for ministry with senior citizens at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Langworthy, Cynthia and Frederick, Belleville, N.Y., are beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Nepal. Cynthia will be ultrasonographer-in-charge.

Meyers, Carrie, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a one-year MCC assignment in China teaching English.

Pannabecker, Joanne Dewerse, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as administrative assistant for the central and southern Asia department.

Smoker, Erika, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Guatemala as assistant director of CASAS.

Wolf, Kay, Lititz, Pa., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as administrative assistant for MCC East Coast.

Yoder, Kevin and Sharon, were licensed June 17 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., for pastoral ministry in Kenya with Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Births

Bauman, Zachary North, July 13, to Jennifer (North) and Kendal Bauman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Doss, Jonathan Douglas, July 28, to Carol (Guth) and Darrin Doss, Washington, Ill.

Groenhuis, Menno Johan, Aug. 4, to Cynthia Shenk and Roelf Groenhuis, Nijmegen, Netherlands.

Hagen, Gabriel John, July 30, to Melanie (Gallagher) and Paris Hagen, Telford, Pa.

Hollinger, Annika Marie, June 23, to Ken and Suetta (Shaum) Hollinger, Engadine, Mich.

Landis, Braden Scott, Aug. 4, to Charla (Bauman) and D. Scott Landis, Telford, Pa.

Leatherman, Ethan Samuel Gerber, July 30, to Evangeline Gerber and Gerry Leatherman, Hillsboro, Ore.

Melhem, Abigail Ann Marie, July 27, to Amanda (Musselman) and Gregory Melhem, Easton, Pa.

Sander, Kolton Brock and Kyler James (twins), Aug. 8, to Brian and Trish (Dyer) Sander, Plainville, Kan.

Siebert, Jayden Claire and Kaia Jillian (twins), Aug. 10, to Craig and Krystal (Redenius) Siebert, York, Neb.

Swartzendruber, Aidan James, Aug. 3, to Brent and Tara (Siebert) Swartzendruber, Henderson, Neb.

Throne, Sarah Elizabeth, July 26, to Julie and Mike Throne, Reston, Va.

Voll, Dana Janelle, Aug. 2, to Elizabeth (Yoder) and Joshua Voll, Bluffton, Ohio.

Marriages

Fairfield/Stauffer: Nathaniel Fairfield, Bridgewater, Va., and Miriam Stauffer, Hinton, Va., Aug. 11 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Friesen/Hollstien: Keenan Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Elizabeth Hollstien, Henderson, Aug. 4 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Geissinger/Mummau: Judy Geissinger, Mifflintown, Pa., and Christopher Mummau, East Waterford, Pa., Aug. 11 at Lost Creek Mennonite Church, Mifflintown.

Hall/Thomas: Kevin Hall, Molalla, Ore., and Theresa Thomas, Woodburn, Ore., July 29 at Canterbury Falls, Molalla.

Heslop/Sheats: Jeremy Heslop, Salisbury, Md., and Carla Marie Sheats, Westover, Md., July 14 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover.

Hubele/Schrag: Joy Hubele, Inman, Kan., and Steven Schrag, Inman, July 28 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Jenkins/Toews: Dale Jenkins, Denver, and Marie Toews, Denver, July 21.

Kauffman/Wenger: Sherri-Lynn Kauffman, Tofield, Alta., and Ryan Wenger, Lebanon, Pa., July 21 at Salem Mennonite Church, Tofield.

Knox/Sisler: Roger Knox, Accident, Md., and Brenda Sisler, Bittinger, Md., Aug. 4 at Bittinger.

Kreider/Markle: Karen Kreider, Reston, Va., and Brian Markle, Reston, July 8.

Meyer/Spohn: Kim Meyer, Lincoln, Neb., and Chad Spohn, Friend, Neb., June 9 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb.

Nafziger/Strunk: Kevin Nafziger, Harrisonburg, Va., and Sara Strunk, Harrisonburg, Aug. 4 at Alden (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Roupp/Schuur: Tim Roupp, Portland, Ore., and Alyssa Schuur, McMinnville, Ore., July 8 at Mount Tabor Presbyterian Church, Portland.

Deaths

Clemmer, Ella Landes, 91, Hatfield, Pa., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Willis H. Clemmer (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Sallie Alderfer Landes (deceased). Survivors: daughter Ruth C. Gahman; two grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Egli, Thomas E., 69, Yoder, Kan., died Aug. 4. Spouse: Glenna Schrock Egli. Parents: Emery and Edna Peterson Egli (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen, Kurt; three grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 7 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Esch, Mabel V., 95, Morton, Ill., died Aug. 5. Parents: Sol and Emma Nafziger Esch (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 7 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Friesen, David A., 81, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Nettie Friesen. Parents: Frank and Anna Thieszen Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerrene Watzel, Dwaine; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Gardner, Shirley Shenk, 65, Aurora, Colo., died July 31 of cancer. Spouse: Lonny Gardner. Parents: J. Roy (deceased) and Ferne Shenk. Other survivors: children Steve, Lori; two grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 3 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Graybill, Vera C., 99, Mifflin, Pa., died June 9. Spouse: Everett Graybill (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Olive Shelley (deceased). Survivors: children Lloyd, Arlene Brubaker; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 12 at Lost Creek Mennonite Church, Mifflintown, Pa.

Miller, Clarence M. (Shorty), 93, Kalona, Iowa, died July 29. Spouse: Mary Mullet Miller. Parents: Harvey and Mary Fry Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Clara Yoder, Albert, Fanny, Mamie Nisly, Ezra; 28 grandchildren; 67 great-grandchildren; 20 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 1 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Oyer, Wilmer "Bud," 78, Eureka, Ill., died July 27 of complications from surgery. Spouse: Marie P. Birkey Oyer. Parents: John R. and Mary A. Oyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Michael, Craig, Kevin, Jean Bernardi; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Burial: July 30 at Metamora, Ill.

Regier, Reuben "Jeff," 83, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Aug. 3. Spouse: Neva Mae Koehn Regier. Parents: Jacob and Mary Cornelson Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice Hoppes, Denise Gerber; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Stuckey, Ronald Jay, 48, Archbold, Ohio, died July 28 from injuries suffered in a farm accident. Spouse: Karen Stuckey. Parents: Chauncey and Pearl Stuckey. Other survivors: child Monrico Cummings. Burial: Aug. 2 at Stryker, Ohio.

Swartzentruber, Vernon, 85, Pigeon, Mich., died July 17. Spouse: Elizabeth Christner Swartzentruber. Parents: Joel and Sarah Bender Swartzentruber (deceased). Other survivors: children Leon, Joyce Marmion, Elva Barstow, Melva Mast, Harold; 14 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 22 at Pigeon River Mennonite Church, Pigeon.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

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classifieds

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- **Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions Inc.** is seeking a person to serve as ***president***. This individual will be responsible for the VMBM mission program. Qualifications include: devoted Anabaptist follower of Christ, commitment to Virginia Mennonite Conference leadership and congregations, administrative gifts, understanding of fiscal and budget management, resource development, skills in communications and personal relationships. Available to begin: summer 2002. Resumes will be accepted through Sept. 30 or until position is filled.

  Contact Lois Maust, 901 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, for more information.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** (Pocono Mts., Pa.) seeks ministry-minded people for two full-time positions at dynamic, multifaceted camp-retreat ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church:

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- **Pilgrims Mennonite Church**, Akron, Pa., is planning a ***25-year anniversary celebration June 28-30, 2002***. Contact Pilgrims Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 217, Akron, PA 17501; or email <abstau@desupernet.net> for more information. If you are a former member and cannot attend, contact us and tell us where you are today.

- **Oak Grove Mennonite Church**, Smithville, Ohio, a rural congregation with approximately 230 active resident members, is seeking an ***associate pastor***. Responsibilities will include preaching, visitation and administration with an emphasis on ministry to youth, young adults and young families.

  If you are feeling God's leading, send letter or resume to Morris Stutzman, Oak Grove Mennonite Church, 7843 Smucker Road, Smithville, OH 44677; email <mstutzman@lhslaw.com>.

- **Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust**, Philadelphia, seeks full-time ***executive director*** with skills in development and fund raising. GMHT owns and manages the historic Germantown Mennonite Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, built in 1770. Priority first three years focuses on enlarging our donor base and fund raising. Qualifications: strong interest in and knowledge of Mennonite history and heritage, possess fund-raising and development skills, training and/or experience in related fields. Must have good people skills, administrative ability, able to supervise staff.

  Send resume to Lamont Woelk, GMHT Search Committee, P.O. Box 448, Richlandtown, PA 18955-0448; 215-538-1452.

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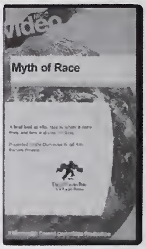

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by Rich Preheim

The Christian and the state (I)

First, 53 people died in 1994 in the heavily publicized murder-suicides of the Solar Temple, a French-based cult. Now some French Christians are afraid they will feel the heat because of recent governmental "anti-sect" legislation prompted by the Solar Temple incident.

In an earlier draft, the legislation listed "mental manipulation" as a punishable offense, reports *Christiantity Today.* That language has been toned down, but ambiguities remain; even the word "sect" is undefined. As a result, both Catholics and Protestants fear the law, passed earlier this year, could be used against religious minorities in France.

Among those registering concern have been the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and international human-rights organizations such as Christian Solidarity Worldwide.

In the wake of the Solar Temple deaths, a French government report included four Christian groups on a list of potentially dangerous sects. Among them was a Baptist school in southern France. The school's founder, American missionary Louis DeMeo, says some people have been denied bank accounts and removed from their jobs because of their ties to the school.

But other French Christian leaders say there is no threat. "I have no time for the idea that we live in a country that represses religious liberties," says Jean-Arnold de Clermont, president of the French Protestant Federation. "We continue to enjoy total freedom in setting up religious organizations as long as the existing legislation is known and applied."

The Christian and the state (II)

Since before the Boy Scouts and their legal wranglings over homosexuality, there has been American Heritage Girls. Today, the God-and-country alternative organization to the Girl Scouts has 1,000 members in California, Indiana and Ohio.

Executive director Patti Garibay and four other former Girl Scout leaders in the Cincinnati area formed American Heritage Girls in 1995. Garibay had been a longtime participant in the Girl Scouts, first as a Brownie and eventually troop leader and camp director. But in the early 1990s, she became concerned about a decreasing emphasis on God and was told it would be illegal for her troop to sing Christmas carols with references to God and Jesus. She was also disturbed by a growing acceptance within the organization that homosexuality is normal.

The American Heritage Girls logo features two girls running across the backdrop of the U.S. flag.

"Those of us involved in the initial start-up of our program wanted a logo that would pay homage to God and to America's heritage, and we felt the American flag met that requirement," Garibay tells *AFA Journal.* "We also wanted to portray the joy and innocence of young girls who, we hope, by their service to God and others as a part of American Heritage Girls, will ultimately become women of integrity and honor."

The Christian and the state (III)

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada has decided that breaking the law can be an appropriate Christian act, says *Sojourners.* The EFC has released a discussion paper that states, "A readiness to undertake civil disobedience constitutes a part of giving unqualified allegiance to God." The paper, "Christians and Civil Disobedience," was written by longtime Canadian Mennonite Brethren leader John Redekop.

"Christians are involved in various types of protest to raise the profile of certain government policies," says Janet Epp Buckingham, director of the EFC's Religious Liberty Commission. "This paper will help those trying to determine if praying at an abortion clinic or protesting at global economic meetings are biblically approved or biblically condemned."

The EFC is an alliance of 32 Protestant denominations and colleges.

Dot-communion

Like many congregations, Fellowship Church of Dallas has changed its name. But it is unlike other congregations in the way it did it. Fellowship Church is now fellowshipchurch.com.

"God created the Internet," Preston Mitchell, pastor of spiritual development, says in *Leadership.* "We have the responsibility to use what God has created to reach people."

While the congregation is not technically changing its name, the dot-com version will be used whenever and wherever possible. Church leaders hope to attract attention to their web site, featuring news, sports, weather, stock quotes, classified advertising, movie reviews and devotionals.

"This was bound to happen," says church historian Bill Leonard. "And this was bound to happen in Dallas."

Tidbits

- The Chinese government has approved two Americans to teach at a Chinese seminary, the first time since the 1949 communist revolution that foreigners have been allowed into China as religious educators for an extended period of time.—*The Christian Century*
- Xerox Corporation cites Native American vision quests as responsible for the invention of one of its best-selling copiers, a 97 percent recyclable machine.—*Sightings*
- A London park features a small monument to conscientious objectors to war.—*Windows*
- Catholics are the most-represented denomination in Congress, with 126 in the House and 24 in the Senate.—*Conscience*

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Everett J. Thomas

Listen, then speak to Washington

Creation of Mennonite Church USA as a country structure separate from Mennonite Church Canada gives our denomination new responsibilities to speak to Washington. Before we address the federal government with our concerns, however, it will be imperative that we listen to our Mennonite neighbors in the global South to learn what our country's actions do to them and to their countries. As recent shifts in U.S. policies reveal a new isolationism, such conversations need to happen sooner rather than later.

All summer long, unsettling news has emerged from Washington. In the last six months, our country intentionally distanced itself from traditional allies and antagonized historic enemies.

First there was news that the United States would not sign the Kyoto agreement on global warming. We abandoned a germ warfare treaty after years of negotiations. We tested a Star Wars missile defense system, directly affronting historic Cold War enemies.

The global community responded in part by demonstrating what such isolationism can mean long-term. One embarrassing example was the decision by other members of the United Nations to remove the United States from its civil rights commission.

> **Are we first U.S. citizens, or first members of the global Mennonite community?**

While there may be understandable reasons for any of these actions—some claim, for example, that the Kyoto treaty places more stringent environmental controls on us than on other countries—our church must decide whether we will first be loyal to our country's leaders and policies or stand in solidarity with Mennonite sisters and brothers in those countries suffering from our policies. As they might ask, are we first U.S. citizens or first members of the global Mennonite community?

Becoming vocal about national policy issues will be new to many of us. Furthermore, there is no adequate system yet in place to discern together what Mennonite Church USA would say to Washington. However, the new church took a small step in the right direction recently by responding to the laments of our Mennonite sisters and brothers in Colombia.

On July 7, delegates to the Nashville, Tenn., convention approved a letter addressed to President Bush and Secretary of State Powell, calling on Washington to "change Plan Colombia, a plan that uses violent means, including the destruction of cash crops and the homes of poor people, with the consequent displacement of millions within their own country."

Colombia is but one country affected by the actions of our government. During discussion of the Plan Colombia resolution, delegate Myron Augsburger appealed for a similar resolution about the Sudan and prodded the assembly to send a second letter to President Bush asking him to give the same amount of financial aid to Palestinians as is currently given to Israel.

We hope that our church's involvement in public policy issues will be greater than a resolution or two adopted by delegates every few years.

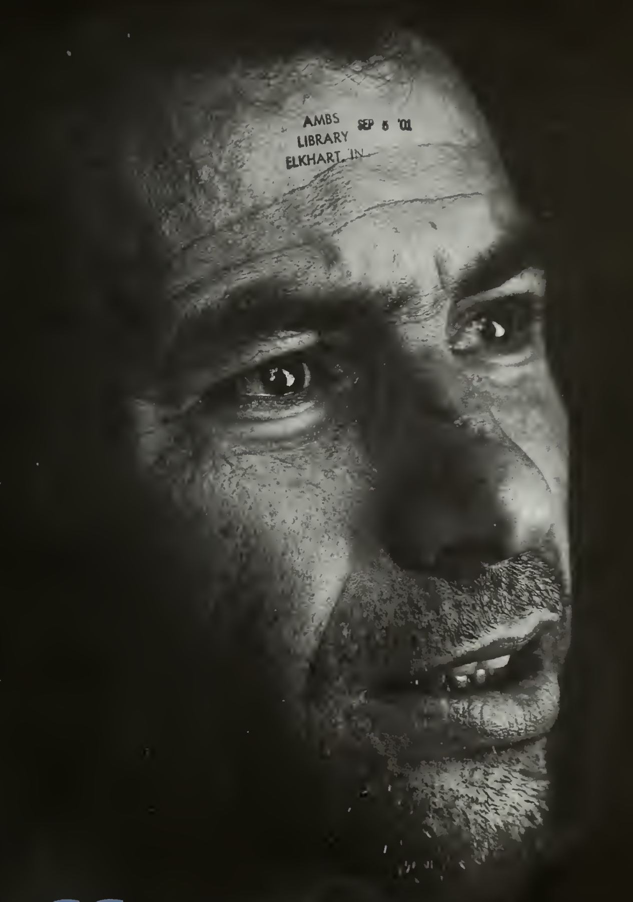
Historically, of course, Mennonite Central Committee has attempted to represent the larger Mennonite family through its Washington Office. Its primary strategy has been to build relationships with policymakers who then might listen to the experiences of Mennonite workers returning from countries affected by U.S. policies.

But Mennonite Church USA cannot rely on this office alone to represent the denomination. MCC's constituency is greater than Mennonite Church USA. Further, as *Mennonite Quarterly Review* reported in a July 2001 article, Washington Office policy stands often differ from the more conservative political views of the majority in our church.

Consequently, our new national denomination will also need to find its voice when speaking to Washington. We will know what to say after we first listen to Mennonite sisters and brothers living in the global South. May such listening and action be a hallmark of the new Mennonite Church USA.—*ejt*

theMennonite

September 4, 2001



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The coffee man

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Resolution response

The Aug. 7 issue included two letters about the Nashville 2001 death penalty resolution. These letters provide the opportunity for clarification.

The Nashville delegate workbook and earlier mailings to delegates outlined the process for submitting resolutions. The three resolutions presented at the delegate assembly followed different paths. Work on the Colombia and Vieques resolutions began months earlier, involved extensive consultation (including Mennonite Church USA Executive Board endorsement) and were submitted to the Resolutions Committee as finished work. The death penalty resolution was developed and proposed to the committee by an informal group of delegates over several days during the assembly.

This informal process resulted in less-than-perfect wording. The resolution states, "We further urge congregations to take action to support abolition of the death penalty through prayer, letter writing and public vigils at murder sites and at prisons where executions occur." However, the purpose of vigils at murder sites is not to make a statement against the death penalty but to offer a prayer service to support the victim's family and to bring the community before God. While this is an action, and thus belongs in the list of congregational actions, this line might have better been included in the text about supporting victims' families. Please make no mistake: Mennonites balance their love and care of the families of murder victims with their deeply held belief that the death penalty is not God's will.

During the discussion of this resolution at the final delegate session, several delegates recommended expanding the resolution to include witness against abortion. Doing so would have violated the assembly rules for resolutions and shortchanged both issues. For this reason, the final resolution voted on by the delegates addressed only the death penalty.

Mennonite Church USA is finding its new path in a multitude of ways. One is deciding how we want to create and pass resolutions so they have theological integrity and so our members have the time and tools to act on them. Nashville was our first attempt as a newly defined community of faith. The lessons learned will be important for future leaders and delegates to use as a foundation for future meetings. We ask for your continued prayers.—*Susan Mark Landis, Mennonite Church minister of peace and justice, Orrville, Ohio, and Ruth Suter, Resolutions Committee chair, Brisbane, Calif.*

What to do with the income-tax refund

President Bush and South Dakota congressional people have been informed that after reading Everett Thomas' editorial "What to Do With $300" (July 3), I gave thought to what might be appropriate to do with my refund. Having received notice that my check will be less than $100, the ripples created when I dispose of it probably won't go far. I will send half to Christian Peacemaker Teams and the other half to the South Dakota Peace and Justice Center. I believe the work of those agencies will accomplish more good with a few dollars than the multiplied billions channeled into "national security," "defense" and welfare for multinational corporations.

May I suggest removing "In God We Trust" from our currency? For decades we have trained and funded assassins and leaders of death squads in Central America. The infrastructure of Iraq was destroyed by massive bombing; more than 1.5 million Iraqi children have died because of the sanctions. The Bush administration wants to escalate the war against the poor in Colombia in its ineffective "war on drugs." Our willingness to use lethal violence is totally at variance with Christian principles. It seems blasphemous that we should proclaim trust in God on our money when approximately half our national budget is earmarked for past and present military spending. "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow" (Galatians 6:7). Would this not hold true for a nation?—*Walter B. Epp, Marion, S.D.*

I didn't ask for this tax rebate, and the possible label of being "moderately rich" (Readers Say, Aug. 7) helped me to decide rather quickly to divest myself of it. International, national and local needs were my donation categories. Mennonite Board of Missions' Mongolia programs, Mennonite Men's church building grants and my local church outreach each got a third. I'm still watching President Bush, but this kind of faith-based sharing feels good. —*Larry Miller, Mashulaville, Miss.*

Gift of time

A lot of change is happening. It has been said life has changed more on earth since 1965 than in all the years of human history. Computers, cell phones, fast food, copy machines, email and the Internet have all dramatically changed our lives. Not only have objects changed but so have our neighbors. In the past, most peo-

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

ple of one particular region and race shared the same area. Today in Fairfax, Va., people of every race and region share the same space.

Values have changed. Two generations ago it was considered important in Virginia Conference to dress with simplicity and not adopt the fashion of the world. That has changed. The land used to be necessary to sustain us by producing food for each household. Now milk and potatoes come from the grocery store.

When too much change happens without time to adjust, we can become reactive, expecting everyone to see things the same way, blaming others for how things have changed, trying to change things back or living off an illusion of "the good old days." Change happens. God is forever creating new things. Timing can make a difference, though, and God has plenty of time to work with—all of eternity.

"Sometimes time is the kindest and gentlest gift we can give each other," said Chuck Neufeld, speaker at Nashville 2001. His words were especially appropriate for the conversations held at Virginia Conference the end of July. Most people wanted to move ahead with Mennonite Church USA, but some were uncertain, resistant, afraid of the change. I wanted to move ahead and hoped it would happen that weekend. It didn't. But we gathered in prayer as conference leadership discerned God's intent for us, and it seemed good that making a decision in January was a gift we could extend to others.

Can you extend the gift of time to someone? Doing so may mean waiting or delaying something you have hoped for or dreamed of doing. But time is a gentle gift. It often means giving of ourselves rather than giving things or objects. Thus it is far more precious in the big scheme of life. Time allows us to discover God at work creating new and wonderful things in our lives.—*Pearl Hoover, Fairfax, Va.*

Cover photo
by Rick Smolan

The coffee man

by Roy Anthony Borges

Sitting on the bottom bunk, he held a book in his lap. Tears streamed from his eyes as he looked at me. Something had happened.

Rick Smolan—for illustration only

Coffee Man looked like a beggar. The first time I saw him, his lanky old frame leaned against the pillar in front of the chow hall as he waited for prisoners to finish their breakfast. He waited so he could fill two butt cans with leftover coffee that he carried in a metal milk crate—grounds and all. Nobody knew his real name. Even the guards called him Coffee Man and left him alone.

Everyone who spent time at Union Correctional Institution—the main prison in Raiford, Fla.—knew about him. He'd been at the "Rock" since the early '60s, one old-timer told me. No one really knew what he was in for either, but many believed he was a mental case from a hospital in Chattahoochee.

All kinds of stains and grime covered his once white uniform. The pant legs were too short, and his pale ankles looked even whiter against his laceless black brogans. I watched that morning as his bulging eyes widened after spotting a cigarette butt someone had dropped. Nobody bothered him as he picked up butts and sipped the cold coffee brew he cherished so much. I never saw him speak to anyone, and he didn't seem to understand what people said to him—whether it was good or bad.

Coffee Man lived alone in a two-man cell on H-floor. I don't think anyone could live with him. The smell alone could kill you. His cell was packed with junk he had collected. Every three months guards made him sweep it out and hose it down. It was a fire hazard, they said. But it filled back up soon enough—especially with newspapers. I wondered if Coffee Man could read. He laid his bald head on a rock that he used for a pillow and slept curled up on the floor under a thin blanket.

Something has changed: One day I visited a friend of mine living two doors down from Coffee Man. As I passed Coffee Man's cell, I saw him pulling the day's collection of cigarette butts from his pockets. I felt sorry for him and threw a pack of cigarettes into his cell, but he silently threw them back out.

"He won't smoke them," my friend told me.

I thought he still had a proud spirit and charity was hard for him to bear.

One morning while passing Coffee Man's cell, I heard a whine like a puppy crying and I peeked in. Sitting on the bottom bunk, he held

The three words he spoke helped change a man's life forever.

a book in his lap. Tears streamed from his eyes as he looked at me. Something had happened.

He stood and opened the book, a Bible. He pointed to John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life."

He looked at me with a new hope in his eyes and said, "He loves me."

I just stared back.

All I needed to know: Shortly after that, officials granted my parole, but it didn't take long before I found myself back in the Dade County (Fla.) jail. Though I had been determined to stay out, determination alone wasn't enough to overcome temptations in my life.

As I sat in that cell, I thought about the only three words Coffee Man ever spoke to me. A few days later a Prison Fellowship volunteer came to my cell and talked about God. Some men gathered to listen. I put my radio headphones on and tuned them out. But I heard them recite John 3:16.

Coffee Man's words told me what I needed to know.

In the months that followed, that verse kept popping up at the strangest times. It followed me like a ghost. How could God still love me after all the times I turned my back on him?

Every time I heard the verse, I remembered Coffee Man's penetrating words: "He loves me."

Every time I heard the verse, I remembered Coffee Man's penetrating words: "He loves me."

On Christmas Eve, 1989, in the jail chapel, I stopped running from those words. They had pierced my heart. I walked forward unashamedly in front of all the men from my cell. I didn't care anymore what they thought. Tears streamed from my eyes as I recalled the hope in Coffee Man's tear-stained face years before. In spite of all the times I've disappointed God, he still loves me.

Roy Anthony Borges is an inmate at Washington Correctional Institution, Chipley, Fla.

Baptism

by Nina Forsythe

On the eve of my death
I'm drawn to the water.
Beneath its shimmery surface
the darkness deepens—
you can drown forever
in that icy fire.
And shall I go down?

I can wait on the shore
day after day, make it
my habitation, put off the day
I must go down, one way
or another. But not forever.

Lord, it's so suffocatingly dark
and endless, when you reach in
whom will you pull up?

How could I leave this familiar
landscape had you not called
out of the sighing wind?
If I stay it would be better
to have drowned forever in the deeps.

I have set my face like flint.
Though the waters close over me,
yet will I hope in you.

Nina Forsythe lives in Hillsboro, Kan.

why I became a Mennonite

second in a series

Peace and justice, community, service

One of the hallmarks of Mennonite faith is that members choose to join the church. It is a voluntary community. We offer a series of articles by members of the Mennonite Church who write about why they chose to become Mennonite. We hope these stories help us all reflect on our own relationship with the new Mennonite Church.—Editors

by Sydney Stigge-Kaufman

Why did I become a Mennonite? That's easy—for the values of peace and justice, community and service. These values encapsulate what Mennonite theology and doctrine is, what Jesus and God call us toward and what each individual should strive for in his or her life.

Peace and justice: The values of peace and justice were relatively new ones for me before I attended Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. I grew up, not in a militant family but in a community and church that prided itself in nurturing youth into the Army, Navy and Air Force. My grandfather served in World War II, my father had joined the Army as a youth and served as a sergeant. Bethel's views on military, pride in country and aggression, coupled with a rousing biblical study by New Testament scholar Walter Wink, led me to question the support of war and an American culture secured by violence.

Stories, which are the life of Mennonite communities, were my means for discovering my faith values and community practice converging together.

I was raised Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, with militant hymns, lessons on the revolutionary Luther and an American flag nestled at the forefront of the sanctuary. In high school my family belonged to a United Methodist congregation. Even though Walter Wink is Methodist and Gene Stoltzfus of Christian Peacemaker Teams reminded me that I had great nonviolence roots in the United Methodist Church, I did not see peace and justice values in the Methodist setting. Searching for the history, doctrinal value or mentors of nonviolence within the United Methodist Church was like trying to become verbally proficient in a dead language.

Values of peace and justice are community concerns. One must be able to discuss, practice and engage with others on the topic. And just like learning a language, learning nonviolence is a process and a journey, not a skill or formula. Within the Mennonite community, I became a silent listener, captivated by my mentors at Bethel and the church across the street. Stories, which are the life of Mennonite communities, were my means for discovering my faith values and community practice converging together.

It was invaluable for me to see the message at church being carried out in the work of Mennonite church members throughout the week. Mennonite theology was not limited to one or two hours on Sunday but continued in members' lives. And the message of peace and justice was not limited to one or two token Sundays per year.

Community: I value silence and being alone with God to think and meditate. But community is also a critical element of spirituality. As human beings, our greatest gifts are the time we offer to one another—the time we take to teach, mentor, lead and challenge others. The staff and professors of Bethel College, the members at Bethel College Mennonite Church and local community members take great skill, intention and care with young adults to bring them into community.

While attending Bethel, and even though I was not a Mennonite, adults knew my name, took interest in me, my thoughts and where I was going. They invited me into a "koinonia" of sharing, challenging and accountability. Countless individuals, in small ways, showed me this gift. They were not preoccupied with moving on to wash their car or run errands. They focused on the younger generation and nurturing them. Consequently they nourish youth with attention that makes us feel valued.

I felt truly blessed to have had those moments. My response is then to listen and learn from the stories and enriched lives of those before me—of war resistance and Civilian Public Service work, of war tax resistance, of work with Mennonite Central Committee overseas—and to learn from them. This kind of attention is also a wonderful com-

Courtesy photo

munity tool for accountability, another element critical to the spiritual development of individuals and communities.

Service: Joining the Mennonite community through my attendance at Bethel College also instilled in me the value of service to community and to others. Service is to be a way of life—not just a few days each year volunteering at an organization or a few hours each Christmas season ringing the Salvation Army bell but an actual value of service incorporated into one's life. As Goshen (Ind.) College has phrased it, a "culture for service" is pivotal to the Mennonite tradition and faith journey.

I have come to understand that Mennonites not only encourage their youth to complete one or two years of voluntary service but at some level expect that youth contribute to society in this method. The moral of this lesson is that the success of the entire society is more valuable than material successes of one individual.

I work with AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a domestic form of the Peace Corps. I try to encourage and recruit other recent college graduates to participate in the VISTA program and work in under-resourced communities for one or two years to improve the economic infrastructure. I am amazed by the pressure these young adults feel from family and society to "get a real job"—one that can make as much money as possible in the shortest amount of time. The concept of giving back to your community is pushed aside so individuals can push forward with careers and salaries.

My reasons for becoming a Mennonite are simple: to be in community with those who will stretch me to be more of a servant, more of a peacemaker and more of a reconciler.

The Mennonite community has also instructed me that two years of service as a young adult is also not enough. At least, it doesn't stop there. One's whole profession can and should be a contribution of service. I know many full-time Mennonite Voluntary Service workers and countless other teachers, administrators, performers and pastors who work in a place and receive less money than they could elsewhere, but they remain there to serve.

There is an important role for those who devote their lives in service to others and the community around them. There is an equally valuable role, however, for those who earn money so that their resources and their spouses' resources can be used in service. You need hearts and hands to do service.

As you may have noticed, my story and reasons for joining the Mennonite faith community has not mentioned or specifically included its Anabaptist roots. I am not against the Anabaptist tradition. I understand the passion behind being Anabaptist—to baptize adults who understand their commitment and relationship with God. However, I have not come to understand a clear distinction between the Lutheran tradition of baptizing infants and then encouraging young adults to confirm their faith through a Confirmation practice, and the Mennonite tradition of dedicating infants and then baptizing young adults. Nevertheless, I continue my journey and understanding of the tradition I have joined.

Service is to be a way of life—not just a few days each year volunteering at an organization or a few hours each Christmas season ringing the Salvation Army bell but an actual value of service incorporated into one's life.

My reasons for becoming a Mennonite are simple: to be in community with those who will stretch me to be more of a servant, more of a peacemaker and more of a reconciler. My faith values led me to this faith community. And I feel at home.

Sydney Stigge-Kaufman is a member of Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

MCC work important to self understanding, Native American says

CLINTON, Okla.—When visitors come to the Cheyenne Cultural Center in Clinton, Nicolas Barton shows them the native plants that line the center's paths. He points out yellow coneflowers, which his Cheyenne and Arapaho ancestors used to fight infections, and sage, an aromatic herb still used in traditional ceremonies.

Born and raised in western Oklahoma, where most Southern Cheyenne live, Barton, 19, didn't grow up being taught plant lore. Instead, it's part of what he has learned during three years as a Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Summer Service worker at the center. The program allows young people of color to work in their home communities. It also allows them to learn about themselves.

"This is where I've found out what it means to be Cheyenne," Barton says. "You have to know and participate in the culture, in the traditions."

Unfortunately, he adds, many young Native Americans don't have this sense of identity and self-respect, which may lead to self-destructive behavior. "I've stayed away from alcohol and drugs, but that's a problem for a lot of people," Barton says.

The center, directed by Cheyenne peace chief Lawrence Hart, was founded in 1977 and moved into permanent facilities just outside Clinton about a year ago. Hart, a leader at Koinonia Mennonite Church in Clinton, and his wife, Betty, are mentors as well as supervisors for the Summer Service workers.

A sophomore at the University of Oklahoma, Barton attends Koinonia. His Summer Service work has included preserving the Cheyenne language and introducing visitors to the center, which also has an art gallery and a pavilion for dances or lectures. He also helped organize a gathering of artists commissioned by the center to create a series of 16 paintings depicting Cheyenne history. Many of the locations in the paintings are familiar to Barton: the Battle of Washita, for example, in which a band of Cheyenne was massacred by Gen. George Custer, took place only 65 miles from Clinton.

Barton was one of 82 participants in the Summer Service program this year. "Being Cheyenne is part of who I am," he says. "It's a rich history."—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

Center goal: pass on Cheyenne language

The first person to create a Cheyenne-English dictionary was Rodolphe Petter, a General Conference Mennonite Church mission worker in what is now Oklahoma and Montana. Now, more than a century later, most young Cheyenne speak only English.

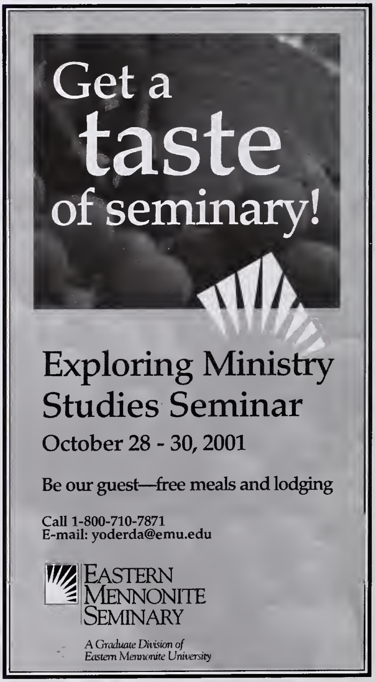
Staff members of the Cheyenne Cultural Center in Clinton, Okla., are working to reverse that. Through oral instruction, innovative computer programs and textbooks, they plan to teach children not only the Cheyenne language but also the Cheyenne culture.

"The language goes with the culture," says Lenora Holliman, a retired special education teacher who grew up speaking Cheyenne and is now working on the project.

Nicolas Barton, a Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Summer Service worker at the center for the past three years, spent this summer working with Holliman to finalize pronunciation markings in a textbook.—*MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Nicolas Barton, a Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Summer Service worker, posts placards identifying native plants at the Cheyenne Cultural Center in Clinton, Okla.



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TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • September 2001 • Issue 8

A new transformation is beginning

For Mennonite Church USA, something greater happened in Nashville than any of the scenarios we anticipated—a move of the Holy Spirit in our midst.

The new church is being conceived as a "missional church"—a denomination that will organize its entire life around being part of the work God is doing in our world.

From the moment it is officially born Feb. 1, 2002, Mennonite Church USA wants to go on record as being a church that exists for others, that reaches beyond itself.

Rather than feeling exhausted at the end of a long journey, delegates at Nashville rallied together with excitement around a common vision of mission. Some even would say that, for the first time among a North American denomination, an epochal shift is happening. The MC USA Executive Board and the new Mennonite Mission Network are relinquishing control of the mission of the Mennonite Church, if even simply to acknowledge what is patently obvious. Mission is rooted in the soul of each believer and congregation, and the denomination's role is "to equip congregations and all parts of the church to be fully engaged in God's mission, reaching from across the street to around the world."

The envisioned result is akin to the sparking of wildfires, perhaps even the birth of the early church or the 16th century Anabaptist movement.

Brenda Glanzer Lilliston and Jonathan Smith, Worshipful Work facilitators for the Nashville 2001 delegate sessions, pray while holding a basin and pitcher symbolic of MCs and GCs coming together. In front of them are pieces of paper on which delegates wrote their hopes for Mennonite Church USA.

While Mennonite Church USA was born as a result of actions in Nashville, a new work of transformation is just beginning.

Tom Price first wrote a version of this article for the daily Nashville 2001 newspaper, Grace Notes.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Christ in us, making us new

Facing the future as Mennonite Church USA

At Nashville 2001, following the two affirmative votes on the plan of merger and membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA, delegates shared their hopes and dreams for the new church's future. They also heard about three challenges facing the new church.

Becoming a missional church

Inspired by the mandate of Jesus, the early church understood itself to be sent—every believer shared a missionary consciousness and a desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ. The Anabaptist communities of the 16th century resembled the New Testament church in its missional consciousness and its intention to share Jesus with others.

Today, our churches are rediscovering what enlivened the witness of the early church and the first Anabaptist communities—the church is missionary and every individual has a part in God's mission in the world. What will it mean for congregations, for the denomination and for the mission agency to become a missional church?

Incoming moderator Ervin Stutzman and outgoing moderator Lee Snyder presided over the Mennonite Church USA delegate sessions at Nashville 2001.

- For the mission agency, it will mean a deliberate shift from doing mission on behalf of the church to resourcing congregations and conferences in their missional commitments.
- For the denomination, it will mean that all parts of the church will work together to provide the resources to help every congregation, conference and each individual to fulfill their missionary calling.
- For the congregation, it means that mission becomes much more than another program or committee—it becomes the center of every congregational activity. Every member of every congregation, in every arena of their lives, will bear witness to God's good news in Jesus Christ.

Preparing leaders for the future

Leadership development is vital to the future of Mennonite Church USA. Putting legs to our missional vision will require bold leadership in every part of the church—in congregations and conferences, in schools and in churchwide program agencies.

Goals for the church in the next 10 years are to call out leaders who are committed to Anabaptist beliefs and to eliminate the shortage of Anabaptist trained pastors and other leaders.

While congregations will continue to be the primary seedbeds for new leaders, Mennonite schools will provide settings where leadership gifts can be identified and nurtured and where young people can test their leadership gifts. Our seminaries will continue to nurture and train new leaders for the church. The next generations of leaders will grow out of an active partnership involving congregations, conferences and schools.

The new Ministerial Leadership office in the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, the Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite colleges and seminaries, the Mennonite Mission Network and area conferences will actively work together to identify new leaders and provide resources for pastors, chaplains and congregational and conference leaders.

The vision includes congregations, parents and pastors enthusiastically inviting and encouraging young people and others to consider God's call to serve in the church—as pastors, in mission, in education. Identifying, calling and preparing the next generation of leaders has always been a challenge for the church, never more pressing than it is today. But it is more than a challenge—it is our opportunity.

Partnering with the global church

"I have a vision for worldwide *koinonia* in the Anabaptist-Mennonite family of faith," says Mennonite World Conference president Mesach Krisetya. Since 1994, the majority of the Mennonite family has lived in the Southern Hemisphere and that is where the church is experiencing the most growth.

Mennonite World Conference finds itself in a swirl of activities to foster fellowship and support among Anabaptist-related churches worldwide. More and more church bodies are beginning to think globally and there is a greater need for mutuality between the churches of the North and those in the South.

In the United States, the growth of the church is most evident in southern California and in eastern Pennsylvania. In the Los Angeles area, 13 of the 29 congregations have been planted in the last 11 years,

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TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • September 2001
Page one – Paul Schrag, *Mennonite Weekly Review*; Page two – Wayne Gehman, Mennonite Board of Missions; Page three – Dale D. Gehman.

Printed in U.S.A.

mostly among new immigrant groups. In Philadelphia, 22 Mennonite congregations from four Mennonite conferences represent 12 different language groups.

"We are working hard," says Lancaster Conference bishop Freeman Miller, "to discover what God wants us to do with this uniqueness and prepare to be gospel salt, light and yeast in the new millennium in ways Menno Simons could have never guessed."

A growing global community in our own country, growing and maturing Anabaptist churches in other lands and greater possibilities for global communication with Mennonites on other continents have provided an unprecedented opportunity for shared ministry for Mennonites in this country with Mennonites worldwide. How will we as Mennonite Church USA respond?

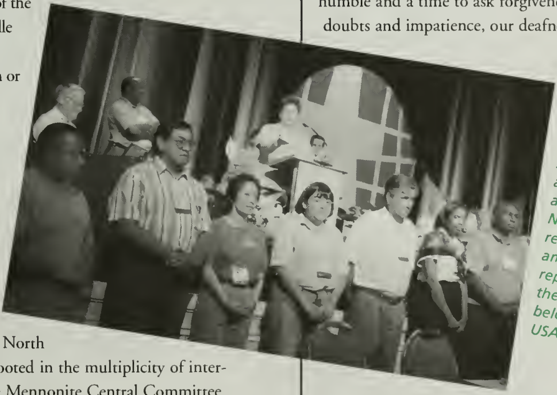
What is God doing among us?

This article is excerpted from a July 5 presentation by historians Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp to Nashville 2001 delegates.

God, in the mystery of his ways, meets us as a pilgrim people, full of promise but flawed. He presents himself to us in moments of assurance and hope laced with anxiety and apprehension – like Abraham and Sarah setting forth on a journey of faith toward a destination the Lord would reveal, or Paul and Barnabas carrying word to Antioch from Jerusalem that the Good News of Christ is for Gentiles as well as Jews.

Such are times of grace when we stand silent, in reverence—words inadequate to describe how out of doubt and hesitation can emerge reuniting and renewal. Like the awesome moment when moderator Lee Snyder announced the results of the vote on membership at Nashville 2001, so low key, so subdued. Then silence. No triumphalism or groans, just silence.

Our decisions here are rooted in a long history of decisions—like Swiss and South German Mennonites adopting the Dutch Mennonite confession in 1660, and in the 1870s and 1920s the assistance from MCs and GCs to Russian fellow believers to migrate to North America. Our decisions are rooted in the multiplicity of inter-Mennonite organizations like Mennonite Central Committee and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.



"I love the Mennonite Church," said Deb Whetzel in response to a presentation by John A. Lapp and Robert S. Kreider at Nashville 2001, in which they reflected on what God is doing among us. She offered a visual representation of her dream for the diversity of people who will belong to Mennonite Church USA in the future.

As a young boy, I, John, became aware of two kinds of Mennonites in eastern Pennsylvania—Old Mennonites and New Mennonites. Relationships between the two, Old and New, MC and GC, were difficult, if they existed at all. But then in World War II, my father, a Franconia bishop, began traveling to MCC peace meetings with the pastor of the GC Zion Mennonite church and they learned to know and respect each other. Something similar happened hundreds of times during World War II among Civilian Public Service and relief workers in Europe. Our decisions here at Nashville have grown out of seeds planted decades ago.

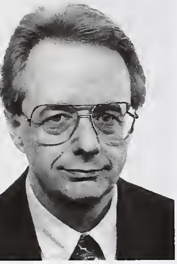
What is the meaning of our actions in Nashville on our sister bodies of Mennonites? Perhaps the question for us is whether we are prepared to allow other Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups, not only in North America but around the world, to help us define ourselves. As the largest Mennonite group in North America, we will be tempted to work unilaterally and independently, but we are only one part of the church family. We are grateful for the intent of Mennonite Church USA to participate in the emerging realm of world Christianity through the Mennonite World Conference.

Several weeks ago Pastor Fimbo Ganvunze of the Mennonite Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo was asked how we in North America should relate to his church. His response was, "We need your love." Can we love other churches as we love our own?

As we face the decisions we have made in Nashville, this is not a time of winning or losing, but a time to praise God. It is a time to be humble and a time to ask forgiveness for our anger and distrust, our doubts and impatience, our deafness and blindness. It is a time to talk with those with whom we have differed. It is a time to love one another as Christ has loved us. We hope that we can now move forward with a new freedom to be bold and passionate in our obedience to Christ. It is time to be a radiant and invitational church.

This church is our home and we have an assurance that Christ is with us for the journey. In Deuteronomy we hear the voice of the Lord with words so immediate to our present need: "The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people…not because you were more numerous than any other people….It was because the Lord loved you…." (Deut. 7:6-8)

Where is Christ leading us?



The Spirit of Christ moved among us quietly, but dramatically, at Nashville 2001. We discovered new relationships and accountabilities as delegates worked together around tables. We experienced a wedding of worship and decision-making that reminded us that God's work is one.

At Nashville 2001, we focused on vision and mission. That seemed to overshadow a variety of doubts and fears. We glimpsed a new view of our leaders. We heard them say that they will set the stage, but God's people must be actors on that stage.

The spirit of Nashville needs to linger a while. We need its power. A missional church is a new idea that was given a strong beginning at Nashville 2001, but it will be easy to lapse into old habits. Being the new church we have envisioned will take grace, faith and hard work.

Where is Christ leading us? Becoming an anti-racist church is surely a new form of our commitment to peace and justice. New partnerships with Anabaptist churches around the world are a timely sequel to a long era of mission work.

We understand leadership differently than we did before—it collaborates and empowers others in ways that grow more leaders. Mennonite education and the sincerity of our stewardship are bedrock values. We must continue to publish literature that will help us hold fast to our Christian commitment.

Our youth are ready to follow Christ faithfully, despite pressures their parents were spared. More than before, congregations and our homes are the carriers of the Good News. Congregations nurture us and prepare us for mission. Pastors remain the single most influential voice among us and they hold the future vitality of Mennonite Church USA in their hands.

Pray that God will give us the courage and clarity to grasp this precious moment entrusted to us for a saving purpose through Christ.

James Schrag

Jim Schrag
Executive Director
Mennonite Church USA

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MBM couple builds French connections

PARIS—Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker Neal Blough calls his wife, Janie, "a pastor to the unchurched." Her church is a classroom; her congregation is adults studying English.

"I've had some students for more than 20 years," Janie says. "This doesn't mean that I'm a failure as a teacher. It is apparent that the classes are meeting social needs for the students, many of whom are professionals. Barriers drop, relationships are built, and conversations take place between races and classes that couldn't happen anywhere else."

One example she cites was a Jewish woman —who lost most of her family in World War II concentration camps—embracing an anti-Semite at a Christmas party.

"I'm seeking to create a safe space," Janie says. "People come burdened. They are tired from work. But after a class where they have had fun, they go home smiling."

Several years after the Bloughs' arrival in France, where they have served with MBM since 1975, city officials asked Janie to teach adult continuing education English classes. Over the years, the classes have grown from 15 to more than 70 students.

Teaching English is a half-time job. She invests the rest of her time in the Paris Mennonite Center, including translation work, ecumenical relationships and hospitality. The Bloughs helped found the center in 1988. It has provided a base for discussion of Anabaptist concerns, as well as a home for the St. Maurice Mennonite Church, a multiracial congregation.

Like Janie in her English classes, there is relational work to be done by the Paris Mennonite Center. "The French see anything other than Catholic or mainline Protestant as a sect," says Neal, who is professor of church history at an interdenominational seminary. "In some media presentations, Mennonites have been listed among the sects."

He anticipates three areas of involvement with the center in the coming years:

- A French-speaking Mennonite network that links Africa, Europe and Québec. Since its inception in 1997, this network, sponsored by Mennonite World Conference and nine European Mennonite agencies or institutions, has organized fraternal visits and seminars in Africa and Europe.
- Excelsis, a Christian publishing house, is ready to launch a collection called "Anabaptist Perspectives" to encourage the production of more original Anabaptist material in French. Neal has contributed to the writing and editing. "We don't have the [French-language] literature that we need to teach," he says.

Among the first publications will be a book of essays on eschatology and ethics, a translation of *Mirror of the Martyrs,* papers from a symposium on John Howard Yoder, and a work on reconciliation and forgiveness being written by Linda Oyer, another MBM worker in France.

- Developing a continuing education curriculum on Anabaptist theology.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

Janie and Neal Blough

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HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
JORDAN, ISRAEL, VIENNA and BUDAPEST (February 15-28)
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MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)
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SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (August 12-26)
SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)
VIETNAM (November 8-25)

2003 TOURS
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE in AFRICA (August)

Going to court

Canadians (left to right) Bryan Born, Cyp Peters, Ben Born and Rudy Dirks turn a public tennis court in Gaborone, Botswana, into a hockey rink for a game of their native country's favorite sport. The hockey players serve with Mennonite Ministries, a joint effort of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and Mennonite Central Committee.

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Merger creates multicampus Pennsylvania school

LANCASTER, Pa.—After more than a year of exploration, a merger has been approved for two Lancaster-area Mennonite schools to form a new school offering kindergarten through grade 12.

The new entity, called Lancaster Mennonite School, will combine New Danville Mennonite School and Lancaster Mennonite Middle and High School. The merger is scheduled to be completed by July 1, 2002.

New Danville has about 185 students through grade 8. Lancaster has about 915 students in grades 6 through 12. In the new school, those grades will continue to be offered at those sites.

Lancaster principal Richard Thomas said the merger was prompted by growing cooperation between the two schools. He also noted that many New Danville students have gone to Lancaster for their high school education.

New Danville, begun in 1940, was operated by a private corporation. Lancaster, begun in 1942, was under the auspices of Atlantic Coast and Lancaster conferences, as will be the new school.

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3,000 Colombians gather to talk peace

NEWTON, Kan.—Amid great violence and social unrest in their country, about 3,000 Colombians gathered July 19-21 to talk and dream about peace.

Participants in the third National Plenary of the Permanent Assembly of Civil Society for Peace gathered in several towns in north central Colombia. Bonnie Klassen, appointed by the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, was one of the event's organizers. She works with JustaPaz, the peace and justice organization of the Colombia Mennonite Church.

"We want to try to reach a more common vision about peace work, not just among the elite peace leaders, but also among everyday people—those who are overwhelmed by countless massacres and violations and who do simply amazing things in their own context to change the world around them without trying to get into the newspaper every other day," Klassen says.

Participants represented 20 regions of the country and represented various sectors of society: peasants, women's groups, youth, senior citizens, displaced people, labor unions, Protestants, Catholics, ex-combatants, indigenous people, human rights groups, government, business and others. There were also 30 international guests from Canada, England, France, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Spain, Sweden and the United States.

For three days, assembly participants focused on the three main themes: "The Protection and Value of Life," "Social Development" and "Strengthening Civil Society." Subthemes included the peace process and negotiations between the Colombian government and the country's various armed factions, urban conflict, peace culture, the role of the international community in Colombia, human rights, employment, health policies and others.

On the first day of the plenary, everyone met together to hear keynote speeches and proposals. On the second day, they gathered in 18 working groups to share experiences and work on fine-tuning proposals. The third day was devoted to another mass meeting to hear conclusions and suggestions for further action. They agreed to ask for a cease-fire in the ongoing confict between the government and rebels, called for greater citizen participation in peace talks, and opposed fumigation of coca fields because of damage to the environment, human health and food crops.

The Permanent Assembly of Civil Society for Peace has been meeting weekly as a much smaller group since 1997. The first plenary was held in Bogotá in 1998 with 4,000 people in attendance. The second plenary was held in Cali in 1999 and drew 2,500. Klassen has been involved with planning each plenary as well as with the peace assembly.

Klassen was one of about 30 Mennonites, most of them Colombian, who took part in the plenary.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

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this date in Mennonite history

Sept. 4, 1769—The Mennonite congregation at Weierhof, Germany, organized some 60 years earlier, requests government permission to build its first meetinghouse.

Latin American leader named to seminary post

PASADENA, Calif.—Multidenominational Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena has turned to a Latin American Mennonite to direct its Hispanic Church Studies program. Juan Francisco Martinez has spent the last eight years as rector of SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary based in Guatemala City.

"Fuller has the potential to be the most extensive and comprehensive evangelical Hispanic training program in the country," says Martinez, who has also served in Mennonite Brethren Hispanic ministries in the United States.

The Hispanic Church Studies program offers courses leading to master of arts and master of theology degrees with a Hispanic emphasis.

Hesston administrator wins national award

HESSTON, Kan.—Clark Roth, vice president for admissions at Hesston College, has been honored for his efforts by the National Association of Christian College Admission Personnel (NACCAP).

"Clark received the award because of his dedication to Christian higher education, his cutting-edge management style and his great contribution to the NACCAP organization," says Chris Miller, an NACCAP board member.

Clark was also recognized for an article he wrote in *Admissions Marketing Report.*

Puerto Rico workers gather for reunion

HARRISONBURG, Va.—More than 90 people from 12 states and Puerto Rico attended an Aug. 11-12 reunion of those who have served the Mennonite church in Puerto Rico over the past 60 years. Included were mission workers, service and Civilian Public Service workers and native Puerto Ricans. The weekend event, held at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, included updates on Puerto Rico, and an offering was taken for Academia Menonita Betania, a Mennonite school in Aibonito.

Canadian finance minister waits for MEDA

WINNIPEG—When it comes to choosing between the second-most powerful person in Canada, Finance Minister Paul Martin, and Mennonite Economic Development Associates, who wins? For Don Cayo, editorial page editor of the *Vancouver Sun,* it was MEDA.

Cayo had already agreed to speak to a MEDA gathering this summer when he got a call from Martin's office asking for a meeting on the very same day and time. Cayo responded that he would be happy to meet with Martin—after the MEDA meeting. Which he did.—*MEDA News Service*

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Rod Chupp
Sturgis, Mich.
(616) 659-2063

Events

Gulfhaven Mennonite Church, Gulfport, Miss., 80th anniversary celebration Sept. 7-9. Contact 228-832-0003; <conradpr@juno.com>.
Young adult gathering at Camp Shekinah, Saskatchewan, Sept. 28-30. Theme: restorative justice. Contact Wendy Harder, 306-249-4844, or Jan Wedel, 316-283-5100.

Births

Amaya, Luisa Lilly, Aug. 8, to Phil and Krista Gingerich Amaya, Canby, Ore.
Barnes, Graham Christopher, Aug. 10, to Chris and Gail (Buller) Barnes, Hutchinson, Kan.
Brueggemann, Olivia Katherine, July 19, to Jon and Jennifer Penner Brueggemann, Hebron, Neb.
Hull, Rylee Jo, Aug. 13, to Kirk and Marcia Stuckey Hull, Wauseon, Ohio.
Klassen, Emily Margaret, Aug. 12, to John and Pauline (Schumm) Klassen, Kitchener, Ont.
Miller, Caleb Daniel, July 22, to Daniel and Jennifer (Alwine) Miller, Elk, Wash.
Unternahrer, Nina Reyes, Dec. 28, 1995, received for adoption Aug. 4 by Karen (Marner) and Mike Unternahrer, Shipshewana, Ind.
Yoder, Caleb Michael, July 25, to Paul and Lisa Grunden Yoder, Etters, Pa.

Marriages

Baer/Long: Bradley Baer, Alden, N.Y., and Stephanie Long, Williamsville, N.Y., July 28.
DeFries/Geiger: Harvey DeFries, Alden, N.Y., and Karen Geiger, Lancaster, N.Y., July 29.
Fisch/Harrington: Andrew Fisch, St. James, Minn., and Amanda Harrington, Butterfield, Minn., Aug. 25 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.
Miller/Schlabach: Amy E. Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, and Mark Schlabach, Millersburg, Aug. 11 at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Misra/Yoder: Anand Misra, Souderton, Pa., and Melanie Yoder, Souderton, Aug. 18.
Shew/Trotter: Gini Shew, Chambersburg, Pa., and Travis Trotter, Columbiana, Ohio, Aug. 11 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Gerber, Kate Hershberger, 100, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Aug. 8. Spouse: Harry Gerber Sr. (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Barbara Miller Hershberger (deceased). Survivors: children Alice Horrisberger, June Miller, Wayne, Harry Jr., Stanley; 15 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 12 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.
Gibble, Mae Hahn, 98, Manheim, Pa., died July 5. Survivors: daughter Lois. Funeral: July 9 at Manheim, Pa.
Kaufman, Edna Ramseyer, 91, Hesston, Kan., died Aug. 5. Spouse: Edmund G. Kaufman (deceased). Parents: Alvin C. and Mary Schrock Ramseyer (deceased). Survivors: stepson Gordon Kaufman; seven stepgrandchildren; 13 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Liechty, Doris Schertz, 78, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 3 of cancer. Spouse: Herman J. Liechty. Parents: Rudy and Tillie Stalter Schertz (deceased). Other survivors: children Allen, Eric, Carolyn Wenger, Phyllis Nofziger, Barbara Detweiler, Rachel Eby, Rita Gingerich. Funeral: Aug. 6 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.
Mast, Kathy, 53, Millersburg, Ohio, died Aug. 10 after a long illness. Parents: Ray and Gladys Mast. Graveside services: Aug. 14 at Berlin (Ohio) Township Cemetery.
Nafziger, Irene B., 89, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 7. Spouse: Clarence Nafziger (deceased). Parents: Simon and Lizzie (Nofziger) Grieser (deceased). Survivors: stepson Robert; 10 stepgrandchildren; several stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.
Nisly, Ruth Wittmer, 72, Hartville, Ohio, died Aug. 4. Spouse: Ralph Nisly. Other survivors: children Rich, R. Lyn, Gordon "Butch," Marilyn Miller, Norma Schlabach, Phyllis Shaffer; 20 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Hartville Mennonite Church.
Pauls, Mary Louisiana, 79, Newport News, Va., died Aug. 13. Parents: William and Gertie West Pauls (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 16 at Peninsula Memorial Park, Newport News.
Shue, Barry, 49, Manheim, Pa., died July 17. Spouse: Patricia Shue (deceased). Parents: Paul and Vera Shue. Other survivors: children Karen Doll, Matthew; one grandchild. Funeral: July 24 at Manheim.
Springer, Craig A., 23, Hopedale, Ill., died Aug. 14 in a work-related accident. Parents: Randy and Rita Myers Springer. Other survivors: fiancée Erin Clark. Funeral: Aug. 17 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.
Yoder, Daniel Mark, 81, Wellman, Iowa, died Aug. 3 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Kathryn Yoder. Parents: John M. and Nannie Hershey Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Merlin, Jackie Hansen, Julia Vanley; one grandchild; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

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  Send resume to Lamont Woelk, GMHT Search Committee, P.O. Box 448, Richlandtown, PA 18955-0448; 215-538-1452.

- **Gulfhaven Mennonite Church**, Gulfport, Miss., ***80th anniversary celebration***: "Praising God & Moving On." Guest speaker: Palmer Becker. Events begin Friday evening, Sept. 7, through Sunday afternoon, Sept. 9.

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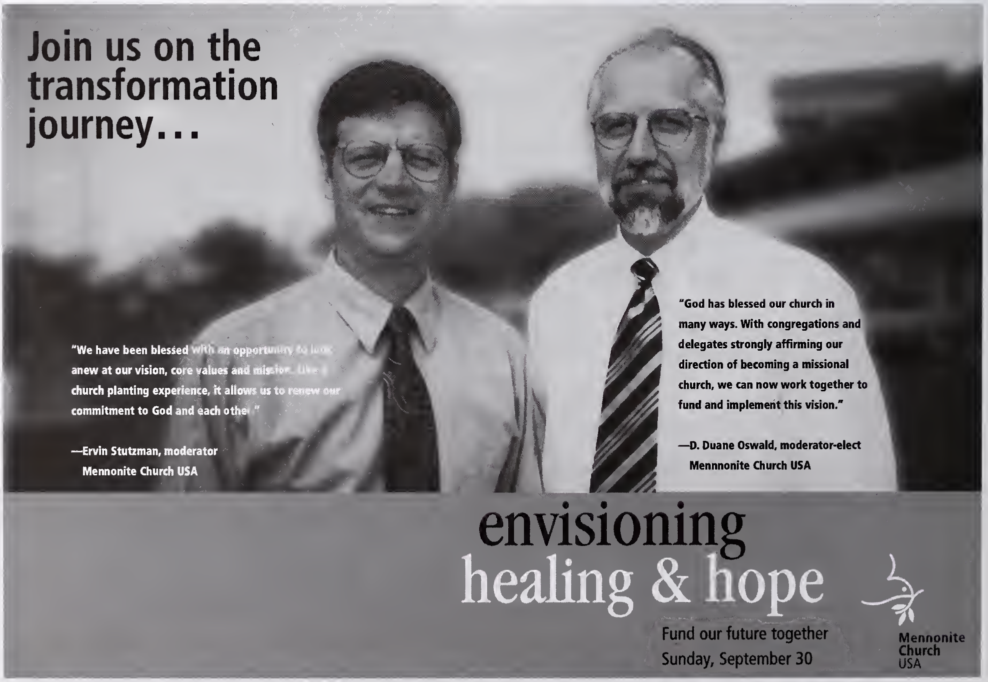

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—D. Duane Oswald, moderator-elect
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Is our peace base eroding?

by C. Norman Kraus

In his book *Biblical Pacifism: A Peace Church Perspective*, Dale Brown observes a growing tendency in the congregations of peace churches to tolerate a variety of individual convictions on the peace position. They no longer require a uniform application in their church disciplines. On practical matters, such as joining the Army or being part of the police force, they leave it up to the individual's conscience. As long as people confess faith in Christ as Savior and loyalty to the church, they are accepted. This, he says, seems to be accompanied by neglect to proclaim and teach the biblical peace message.

More recently, in the introduction to his book *Anabaptist Theology in Face of Postmodernity*, J. Denny Weaver expresses his belief that "it is precisely at the point of rejecting violence that the reign of God made visible in Jesus is most distinct from the prevailing social order." He is deeply concerned that if we do not make rejection of violence a "test issue" for fellowship in Mennonite congregations, we will lose our testimony to it as "an intrinsic dimension of the theological equation." I suspect this may indeed be the case. The logic would be that if peace is an individual decision, not at the heart of the gospel, then we should not harp on it.

Let's think about that for a moment. Is peace in human relationships peripheral to the "gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15)? Certainly we should allow for individual decision in the application of ethical details. For example, while we preach family fidelity, nurture and respect, we do not spell out the details of family relations in our church discipline.

Presumably the same should be true in the area of peace. But is an oath to take arms in defense of one's nation, which contradicts one's pledge of allegiance to the Prince of Peace, entirely an individual matter?

We do not demand that people fully understand all the implications of being a Christian before we baptize them into the church. The Bible does not require perfection in order to enter the kingdom of God, but it does require conversion to the way of Christ. And that leads to my concern.

As we reach out to people of other cultures, both in America and abroad, it is necessary to relax traditional rules that may have become legalistic and concentrate on the call to conversion. But this necessitates two things. First, we need to preach a full gospel of conversion, a radical turning to Christ as both the giver and example of life. And second, we need to pay more, not less, attention to the ethical implications of that conversion for our Christian lifestyles.

The New Testament epistles themselves furnish an example of this process. As the gospel spread to the pagan world, the evangelistic message of Christ as Lord and Savior remained central. The apostles did not raise rigid ethical boundaries. They remained centered on Christ. However, at the same time they gave increasing attention to the ethical implications of becoming a follower of Christ. Notice how much emphasis Paul, who is the apostle of grace, gives to ethical exhortation.

Our peace base will erode quickly if we both relax the ethical entrance requirements and at the same time neglect to teach rejection of violence as intrinsic to the gospel.

Our peace base will erode quickly if we both relax the ethical entrance requirements and at the same time neglect to teach rejection of violence as intrinsic to the gospel. As Paul commanded Timothy after he had given a variety of ethical instructions, we must "teach and urge these duties" (1 Timothy 6:2c).

C. Norman Kraus is a retired teacher, missionary and author and a member of Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

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Everett J. Thomas

Necessities for a radical conversion

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."—John 14:6

They are tough questions for our church: Must a Mennonite be a pacifist? Or can a pacifist be a Mennonite without believing that Jesus is the only way to our heavenly Father?

While the first question may be more common, Mennonite Church USA will be increasingly confronted by the second as we engage a pluralistic world.

Occasionally congregations invite believers into membership, even though they flatly disagree with our teachings on peace. Or a congregation may welcome a person who is committed to an ethic of peacemaking and justice but who does not claim Christ as the exclusive center of life.

Rather than settling for one or the other as acceptable for Mennonite identity, we must teach both with equal conviction. This is the "radical conversion" that C. Norman Kraus describes (page 15). As Kraus says, we need to concentrate on two necessities: belief in Jesus as both the source of true life as well as the only model for living life as God intended.

We are usually more comfortable seeing Jesus as the model for living than to insist that Jesus is "the way, and the truth, and the life," as he explained to his disciple Thomas in John 14. In a world that preaches relativism and derides those who make any claim to know the truth, we find it easier to change the verse; we want to suggest that rather than being *the* way, maybe Jesus is *a* way.

When we are clear about what we believe, we become even more inviting and attractive.

It does require a leap of faith to claim Jesus as the way. Poet Nina Forsythe describes this leap with metaphor (page 5). Believing and being baptized into Jesus is like willingly drowning oneself in an icy fire: "I must go down, one way or another. But not forever." There are no guarantees about who we will become after this baptismal drowning.

What will be the teaching position in the new Mennonite Church USA when it comes to such a radical understanding of faith and conversion?

Will we say it is good enough to believe in Jesus without also believing that peace is at the heart of the gospel Jesus brought? Or will we say that it is good enough for members to do what Jesus would do but that it is not necessary to believe in Jesus as the person through whom God reached out to the world?

Article 2 of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective is unambiguous: "We worship Jesus Christ as the one whom God has exalted and made Lord over all."

Our church believes all three parts of John 14:6. Jesus described himself not only as the life, as if once we are saved we are finished and can live happily ever after. Neither did Jesus describe himself as just a pathway to right living, as if it is good enough to follow his ethics and behave our way into heaven.

Ours is a radical faith. It requires not only a strong christological center to the exclusion of other truths but also behavior that changes as we are personally transformed by God's presence along life's way.

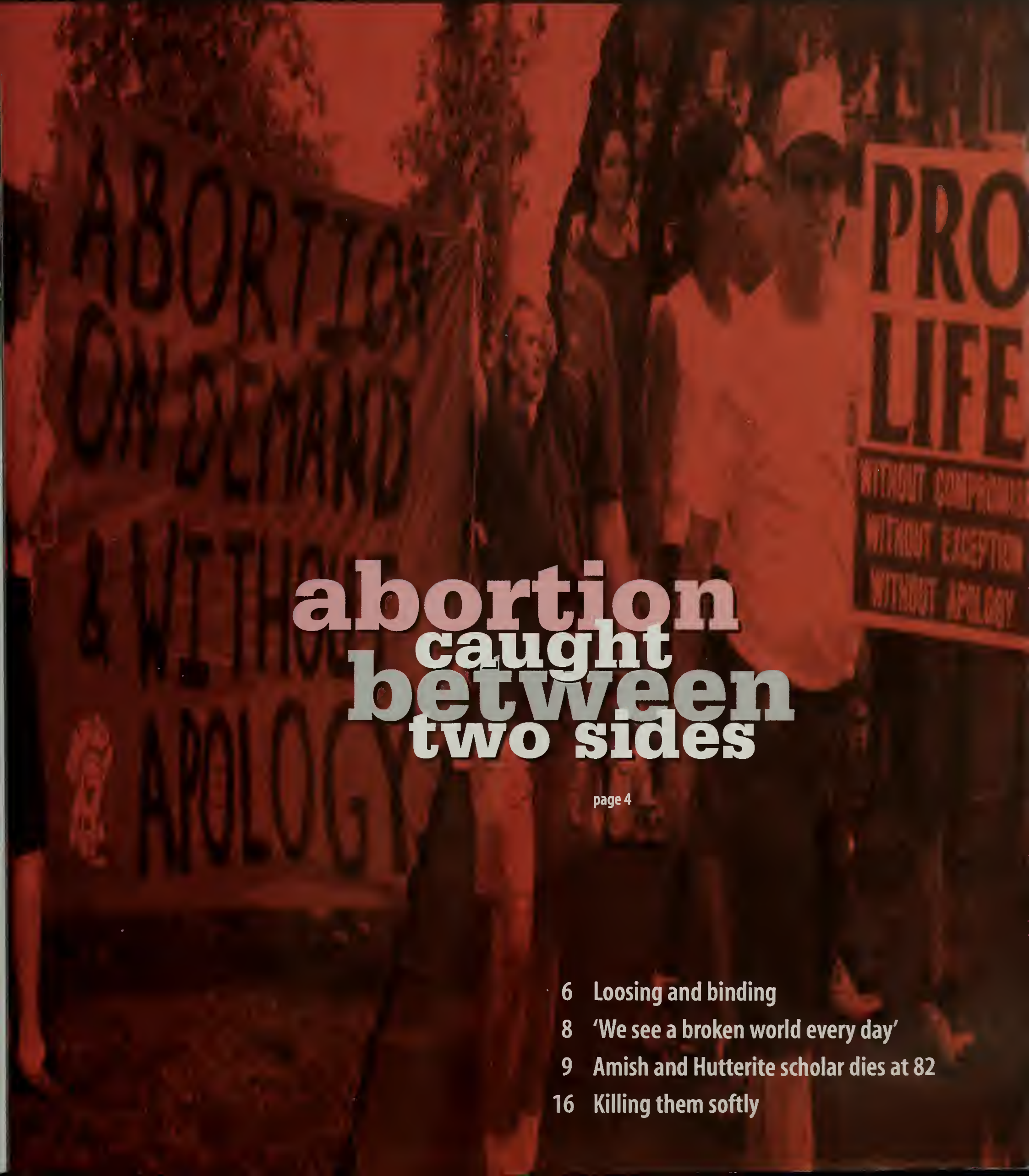
New Mennonite Sydney Stigge-Kaufman (page 6) understands. A Christian who discovered the meaning of such radical discipleship while attending Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., she already had Christ as her center. At Bethel College she discovered that "Mennonite theology was not limited to one or two hours on Sunday but continued in members' lives."

These are the implications of Jesus' claim to be the way, the truth and the life. Mennonites both believe in Jesus and believe that peace is the heart of the gospel. These may be hard lines to draw, but if the new Mennonite Church USA does not draw such lines, we will not be the people of our intentions.

Many people are searching for a faith community that is more than a Sunday morning experience. When we are clear about what we believe, we become even more inviting and attractive to such neighbors across the street and around the world.—*ejt*

theMennonite

September 11, 2001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LIFE
WITHOUT COMPROMISE
WITHOUT EXCEPTION
WITHOUT APOLOGY

abortion caught between two sides

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16 Killing them softly

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Getting over the hump

I'm disappointed with Everett Thomas' statement, "We knew that such a luxurious facility would attract more of our church members" in the Aug. 21 editorial ("Stuffing a Camel Through the Eye of a Needle"). He was referring to the Opryland Hotel, implying that this setting was chosen for Nashville 2001 because it would bring more Mennonites to the assembly.

I was offended by this choice of location, and I'm doubly offended if it was chosen for its opulence. The Opryland Hotel is no friend of the environment. The luxurious artificiality there requires extensive energy use. There is no free lunch; someone somewhere is paying (and will continue to pay) the true cost of the way we indulged ourselves. You can be sure it isn't those with power and money in our society.

I hope the record attendance at the assembly was more due to the historic business that took place than to the grandiose setting. And I hope that future assembly locations will better reflect Jesus' teachings about simple living and economic justice.—*Ron Meyer, Scottdale, Pa.*

I appreciated "Stuffing a Camel Through the Eye of a Needle." God's grace will always be sufficient to stuff even the biggest camels through the smallest needle eyes. Yet the reality of our wealth is not an arbitrary fact. Our affluence was built on the genocide of Native Americans and the enslavement of Africans. In the last 50 years, it has been built on the backs of the global South; many of these backs were and are our Mennonite brothers and sisters.

While many of us still believe our own government's propaganda that this is not so, our church's unwillingness to deal with this when we talk about Mennonite World Conference cannot and will not be sustained much longer. As we attempt to become one Mennonite world body, the exploitative nature of the relationship between the West's and the South's economic realities will be a major inhibitor. Because the exploitation is not static, it is a self-perpetuating demon, which continues to expand to the ends of the earth and grow more powerful every day. We, as Mennonite Church USA, will increasingly be divided between our brothers and sisters in Christ and the financial institutions that make our wealth possible by seeking, destroying and dividing the South's resources.

God's grace is sufficient, but the body of Christ reconciles all to God and to itself. Wealth can serve God's kingdom, but our wealth is sinfully contrived and is a relational deterrent. Prepare to choose between conventional Western camelhood and the global body of Christ.—*Dan Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan.*

Christian conversations

Thomas Finger in "Church Talk" (Aug. 14) is correct in writing, "Mennonites have never joined either of the two largest ecumenical bodies in the United States: the National Association of Evangelicals and the National Council of Churches." However, the General Conference Mennonite Church was a member of the earlier Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The first GC representatives were sent in 1905, and the conference joined in 1908. At the 1917 GC session, it was decided to discontinue the affiliation. The newly elected GC president, J.W. Kliewer, was so upset by this action that he resigned from his position. A sizable number of GC leaders felt we should be in dialogue with other churches. In subsequent years, the General Conference Mennonite Church has sent representatives to both of the current organizations, and they have made reports to the conference.—*David L. Habegger, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

Being and doing

At first I was a bit puzzled by the statement, "At Nashville, delegates rallied around the prospects of being the church across the street and around the world, rather than slogging through the divisive issues of homosexuality and membership" (editorial, "Miracle to Miracle," Aug. 7). But now I understand what is meant: We can talk about being a church in mission as long as we are spared the inconvenience of doing it in situations that make us uncomfortable.—*Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon*

Caring about health care

In regard to Merlin Friesen's "Coloring Outside the Lines in Health Care" (July 24) and Ken Kraybill's response (Readers Say, Aug. 21), I would like to add that it isn't only "our neighbors" who do not have access to affordable health care. I have been a nurse for many years. While employed by a hospital, I had pretty good insurance coverage, though it was very expensive. I say pretty good because when my then-husband needed mental health care, our $20,000 lifetime benefit was exhausted within about six weeks. I then had several years of paying privately for whatever care he received, until finally he qualified for Medicare

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

disability. Even then, I had to maintain coverage through my job because Medicare didn't pay for prescription drugs. Now that we are divorced, he has all the care he needs through Medicaid.

Currently, a friend and I are opening a hospice. As potential employers, we are trying to determine how we will provide insurance coverage for ourselves and our employees. An agent enthusiastically recommended an insurance plan that was very affordable. I studied it carefully and found that it certainly was affordable because it excluded things such as maternity and well-baby care, mental health care and prescription drugs.

I agree that inequality in access to health care is an issue that requires serious attention from the church.—*Cathy Conrad, Albuquerque, N.M.*

Thank you for printing Merlin Friesen's excellent article. I was not surprised that there was a problem, but I had no idea that it was so huge that 44 million Americans are suffering from the lack of health insurance.

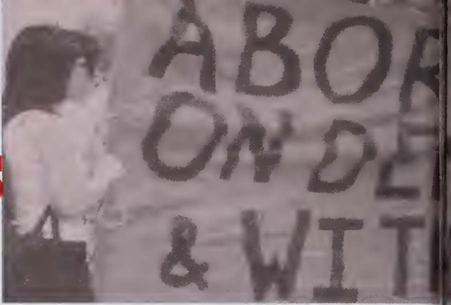
The article is so well written that it leaves no place for doubt or inactivity. Friesen's style of writing pulls the reader into understanding and support. The question becomes one of asking what can we, as a church, a body of believers, do about it. In a time when our church leaders have dealt so well with other great problems, I hope they will seize this one soon.—*Emanuel C. Hertzler, Goshen, Ind.*

No homecoming

Thanks to Carolyn Yoder (Speaking Out, Aug. 7) for further perspective on how cross-cultural exchanges change us. What she writes resonates with my personal experience. Somehow one is not at home in either culture, though familiar with both. The old song begins to make sense in a new way: "This world is not my home."
—*E. Elaine Kauffman, Mountain Lake, Minn.*

Cover photo
by Ann Minter Fetters

Caught between two sides



Reflections on the pro-life beat after covering Operation Save America

by Ann Minter Fetters

The phone rang on a sultry July afternoon. "Hello, is this Ann Fetters?" came a dignified voice over the phone lines.

"Yes it is," I answered.

"This is Victoria Graham in New York from WomensEnews. I was given your name by your editor at *The Wichita Eagle*. We're looking for a writer to cover the upcoming anti-abortion protests in Wichita [Kan.]. Would you be interested?"

Part of me groaned. Part of me was elated.

I had planned to keep a comfortable distance from the throngs of anti-abortion protesters threatening to converge on our city the week of July 16, just as they had 10 years before. Representing the national movement Operation Save America (OSA), they were returning to observe the 10th anniversary of the "Summer of Mercy," a 46-day protest in 1991 that targeted Dr. George Tiller's clinic in Wichita, one of the few clinics in the nation that offers late-term abortions.

During that summer, thousands of protesters were set on blockading the entrance to Tiller's clinic so that patients could not have access to his services. As a result, 2,700 arrests were made. The entire ordeal cost the city $800,000 in police security.

"Could I ask who your news service is sponsored by?" I said.

"We're funded by the National Organization of Women."

While I was not interested in supporting media associated with Operation Save America, I was not so sure I was ready to jump on the pro-choice wagon. Another factor that added an emotional dimension to the picture: I was five months pregnant and showing.

While I was not interested in supporting media associated with Operation Save America, I was not so sure I was ready to jump on the pro-choice wagon.

"What we want is an objective news report," she said. "We want you to talk to both sides and give us a local perspective on the action."

Now the elated side of me perked up. For a blossoming free-lance writer, this was a big break. The national exposure would be a thrill, and this woman was offering me four times as much as I had ever been paid for an article.

"I'll do it," I said and hung up, my lazy summer thoughts now spinning in a whirlwind. I planned my approach. I clipped every article the *Eagle* had printed in the previous month on the upcoming protest. I logged onto the web sites of both sides. I read about the "therapeutic abortion services" Tiller was offering as well as the "call to arms" decree of the Operation Save America folks, whose local campaign was titled "Jesus Is the Standard."

I looked into Kansas history regarding abortion protests and at the state laws in place. I found that in 1992, in response to the clinic blockades in Wichita, Kansas had passed a law protecting the entrances to abortion clinics.

Peaceful: The local leaders of the pro-life movement were promising that this time the protests would be peaceful. Still, Wichita took no chances. The pro-choice camp staged clinic-defense training sessions at Wichita State University. A group of Kansas clergy, calling themselves Kansas Religious Leaders for Choice, published a large ad in the *Eagle* denouncing OSA, calling the movement "anti-women and anti-choice."

Abortion rights proponents were pleasantly surprised when U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft, known for being staunchly pro-life, ordered the U.S. Marshals Service to give "door-to-door" protection to Tiller, who had been shot in both arms by a protester in 1993. Wichita's mayor held a press conference calling for increased police security at the clinic. The city even raised the bail amount for any out-of-state protesters arrested in the area surrounding Tiller's clinic.

My first move was to attend the opening OSA rally at Word of Life Church, which was sponsoring the events that week. I wanted to get a good idea of the pro-life side's perspective, which meant getting on their turf.

On the evening of July 15, notepad in hand, I walked with Mike, my husband, across the grassy parking lot that led to the modern church building. Local TV stations were there with roaming cameras. A large semi-trailer plastered with photos of aborted fetuses was parked at the church's entrance. As we approached, we were told to register and sign a "commitment to nonviolence" statement before we could enter the sanctuary. I was impressed by that rule, and made a note to include that in my story.

The rally resembled a revival. Flip Benham,

TION
AND
OUT
PRO
LIFE
WITHOUT COMPROMISE
WITHOUT EXCEPTION
WITHOUT APOLOGY

Ann Minter Fetters

national director of OSA, was at the podium, Bible in hand, proclaiming to the overflow crowd that "they were ordained by God" to speak up against this sin of our nation and follow God's law, not Caesar's. The crowd, many of whom had traveled from as far away as New York and California, responded with enthusiastic "amens" and "hallelujahs." Then the local director got to the podium and prayed for the salvation of Tiller, who had earlier been labeled a "hired assassin."

Army of God: A long line of pastors came to the front, offering prayers for the events about to take place that week. Although one pastor prayed that the protest would be constructive rather than destructive, many referred to their group as an army of God. Long, brass horns were raised from all four corners of the sanctuary, sounding a trumpet call to war.

Next morning I attended the March for Life, which involved over 1,500 pro-life demonstrators marching through Wichita's downtown business district, posters and banners in tow, waving American flags and blasting contemporary Christian music from loudspeakers planted atop trucks and vans. Young men, mothers pushing strollers, retired folks, children and teenagers walked side by side. The children's faces turned fearful when a small group of abortion rights supporters stood on the sidewalk chanting: "Right-to-life, that's a lie. You don't care if women die."

I noticed a friend of Mike's steering his motorized cart at the back of the parade. Now in his 50s, Pat has coped with cerebral palsy his entire life. He is a devout Catholic, and the front windows of his apartment are covered with posters denouncing abortion. It struck me then as I watched him riding silently amid the shouting, Here was a man whose life some would consider to be of low quality. But Pat was there, wielding a strong spirit in a defiant body, to say that life matters.

The protests at Tiller's clinic began as early as 4:30 every morning that week, as pro-life and pro-choice demonstrators jostled to find a place near the clinic's entrance. In the afternoons the heat index reached 110 degrees, only raising the tensions between the two groups. Pro-life demonstrators paced the front of the clinic, reading Scripture passages aloud, some kneeling and praying to the point that their foreheads touched the dry grass. Some preached using amplified sound systems that continually blared religious music. Once Benham pointed to the pro-choice pastors present and declared them "false prophets."

Meanwhile, pro-choice demonstrators yelled and taunted the other side, spewing insults that are not fit to print in this article. By week's end, only four people had been arrested—two pro-life pastors for kneeling to pray in a restricted zone, two pro-choice activists for shoving pro-life demonstrators in efforts to get close to the entrance.

As each searing day passed, I was on the phone with my editor in New York, watching the local press and assembling the notes and articles I had collected. I was surprised when the NOW web page called for contributions to bail out the two pro-choice demonstrators. Considering they had been charged with assault for shoving two older women (after being repeatedly warned to stop), I saw this fund raising as supporting violence.

Picketing: The following Sunday, the OSA troops left, but only after picketing the parking lots of local churches. I attended one of those churches that morning, to say farewell to the pastor who had married us four years earlier and was leaving to serve as a conference bishop. Not only was the pastor of this church openly pro-choice, but this was the church Tiller attended. With my reporter's cap now cast aside, I approached two of the protesters as a former parishioner.

"I really think this is wrong," I told a gray-haired woman who was passing out brochures on Tiller's practice. I tried to keep my voice quiet and calm. "How would you feel if I were to stand outside your church and shout at you on a Sunday morning?"

She was ready with an answer. "Ma'am," she said, "if my pastor was in favor of killing babies, then I would be right out there protesting with you."

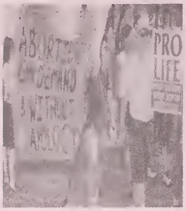
"But what if you didn't agree with my position?" I said. "Do you really think you should be interrupting people's worship on a Sunday

continued on page 6

Pro-life and pro-choice demonstrators jostled to find a place near the clinic's entrance. In the afternoons the heat index reached 110 degrees, only raising the tensions between the two groups.

Caught between two sides

continued from page 5



morning? I think it's unethical for Christians to be picketing Christians."

It didn't end there. In the middle of the service that morning, a woman who had sneaked into the sanctuary abruptly stood and shouted, "Hypocrites! Hypocrites! You go to church with a baby killer!"

The ushers were ready and promptly escorted her out of the sanctuary.

Desperate women: With my criticism of Operation Save America, many readers may presume I am pro-choice. I am not. I believe abortions for the sake of convenience are unconscionable. In fact, I think abortions falling in this category should be illegal. Before that happens, though, we need to have 10 alternative clinics where each abortion clinic stands now in order to offer the support necessary for desperate women to carry through with the challenge of childbirth and parenting.

Anyone who claims this growing mass of cells isn't a life should have witnessed my sonogram at just eight weeks. There on the screen moved a tiny being with a beating heart. Mike squeezed my hand as I lay on the table. The technician pointed to the delicate tube inside the developing body, amplifying our baby's heartbeat so that it sounded loud and clear.

The verbal violence that took place outside that clinic and throughout our city did nothing to serve the women who need our help the most.

There are rare cases in which I believe an abortion is the lesser of two evils—for example, when the mother's health is in danger. In those situations, I believe the decision should be left to a woman, her partner and God.

Some people may say that by doing this story I sold out. They may be right. When my story appeared online the morning of July 23, I was dismayed to see that some key words had been changed. The story clearly sided with the pro-choice platform.

"Anti-abortion protesters" were labeled "anti-choice." It stated that the OSA leadership left the scene "fractured"—which I don't believe it did—and Tiller was now referred to as "a rare physician willing to be known as being available to perform late-term abortions."

The Wichita Eagle concluded its coverage by proclaiming the week a peaceful one. I think it was far from peaceful. The verbal violence that took place outside that clinic and throughout our city did nothing to serve the women who need our help the most. I pray that we allow God to move us toward a more productive response.

Ann Minter Fetters teaches English and journalism at Hesston (Kan.) College. She is also a correspondent for The Wichita Eagle.

Loosing

by David Schroeder

To discern God's will we must learn to wait. Israel during the time of the prophets knew what it was like to hear contradictory messages. Both true and false prophets claimed to speak for God. How were the people to know whose word to obey?

Often the words of the true prophet seemed opposed to what the people believed God required. In the end, they had to wait and see which prophet's word God would fulfill.

During Jesus' ministry the same thing happened. There were two contradictory messages. Jesus' disciples claimed that he was the Messiah who had come to establish the reign of God on earth. The religious leaders claimed that Jesus was a false teacher who broke the Sabbath laws. Which voice were the people to believe?

When Jesus was killed, it seemed that Jesus' opponents would succeed. But in his resurrection it became clear that it was the disciples who spoke for God.

In a time of instant everything, we find it difficult to wait on God for an answer. We have no patience for a period of discernment. It is difficult for us to take Gamaliel's advice to wait for God's will to become evident in history: "If this plan … is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow [these disciples]—in that case you may even be found fighting against God" (Acts 5:38b-39).

If we take seriously the biblical statement "you will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16), we will need a history, a time of observation, to come to know what is of God. This applies to all questions where the will of God needs to be discerned by the community.

The Rule of Christ: The Anabaptists expected all converts to place themselves under the Rule of Christ, exercised through the church. They believed that people came to know the will of God through corporate discernment, not individually.

This was the understanding they brought to Jesus' words on "binding and loosing" (Matthew 16:13-20) and forgiveness (18:22). The church discerned and members proclaimed through their lives the things they were loosed or freed from. They were freed from slavery to sin, from sins of the flesh, from false beliefs and loyalties, from customs and traditions that separated people from God. In Christ they had been set free.

On the other hand, the church bound itself

and binding

Biblical reflections on discernment

to those things that were of God. They did this through studying the Word of God, through teaching, prayer, singing, disputations, confession and commitment. They exhorted each other and supported each other. They took mutual accountability seriously.

This is still the best way for the church to grow in its understanding of the gospel. We, too, need to know from what we are freed and to what we are to be committed as we follow Christ in life. This was also the basis on which Anabaptists exercised church discipline.

When there is disagreement: When groups in a congregation disagree about what it means to be faithful to Christ, all sides must be taken seriously. Each group has good reasons for its position. But these groups need an arena in which to test whether their beliefs promise to be life-giving for the church and for those for whom they are contending.

All too often such discussions result in polarization. The parties hold to one or the other extreme, an either/or formulation of the problem. To move to either extreme without a full discussion of the differences would be wrong. Both alternatives are likely wrong in that they are both extreme positions.

Discernment, especially on significant issues, takes time and effort. Discussions need to take place in congregations, area conferences and on the national church level. Input and information is needed from all sides.

People often do not agree on the biblical materials relevant to an issue, yet each group believes its interpretation represents the biblical message most faithfully. It takes time to sort out such deep differences. There is also a lot of fear associated with such discussion and it takes time to learn to trust each other.

Above all, it takes time to become convinced that we are all searching for the truth and for the growth of the church in Christ. We need time to become willing to abide by the discernment of the church.

Mission: Perhaps the best starting point is to focus on our mission as a church. What promises to be a saving word from God? We know in advance that it will be in harmony with the love that Christ has given us.

In Judaism, the scribes were to do the loosing and binding for the people. They were to study the law of Moses and determine what people were free to do (loosing) and forbidden to do (binding). Any scribe could suggest a law or an interpretation of the law. The other scribes would then try to show that, in certain situations, the law or ruling did not stand up to scrutiny.

If no one could find a reason why the ruling should not become binding, it was considered to have the approval of all the scribes and became binding. In those instances where the scribes could not agree, no binding word was given.

On the question of divorce mentioned in Deuteronomy 24:1-4, they could not agree. The Shemmites held that only in the case of adultery could a husband divorce his wife. The Hillelites claimed that a husband could divorce his wife if he found any "indecency" in her.

As a result, the people had to live without a final word on this matter, and it is not surprising that they came to Jesus for help. Jesus indicated that they were both wrong. Divorce is never what God intended (Mark 10:1-12).

What is significant is that they did not presume to have a final word until they could come to some form of agreement. More homework was needed. But the scribes fully believed that with time God would give them understanding to resolve the problem.

The greatest of these is love: When one of the scribes heard Jesus debating with the Sadducees, he asked Jesus, "Which commandment is the first of all?" (Mark 12:28). The scribe assumed that once the rank of the laws was established you would know what to do.

Jesus seemingly did not accept the scribe's premise. Jesus summed up all the laws of the first covenant with a verse from Deuteronomy 6:4b-5a: "The Lord our God is one. … You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul." He added Leviticus 19:18, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." This is what God requires in all circumstances.

We know that this command of love is central, but we still need to discern what it means in specific situations. It cannot be made to say that all people should be accepted by the church regardless of what they do. Neither should all be excommunicated who disagree with what the church holds to be binding.

Love cannot be without discipline, and discipline cannot be without love for it to be Christian. Hospitality and discipline are both to be embraced. The question is, How? This is what we need to address.

Love cannot be without discipline, and discipline cannot be without love for it to be Christian. Hospitality and discipline are both to be embraced. The question is, How?

David Schroeder is professor emeritus of New Testament and philosophy at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg.

'We see a broken world every day'

Peace best message for city, Cleveland pastor says

The people who do the most work are the most energized. I don't try to figure that out. I just praise the Lord that we have that kind of commitment.

—Robin Miller

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Left to right: Volunteers Katherine Rogers, Mildred Atkins and Robert Jackson do filing at the Lee Miles Hunger Center, one of 20 ministries of Lee Heights Community Church, a Mennonite congregation in Cleveland.

CLEVELAND—When drug dealers started working in the parking lot of Lee Heights Community Church—where children from the congregation's day-care center play—the congregation decided to be just as bold.

Volunteers from the congregation began sitting outside the church, talking with the dealers and inviting them to Narcotics Anonymous meetings at the church. "We weren't antagonistic, but we had to let them know we weren't going to hide inside," says Robin Miller, Lee Heights pastor since 1992.

In Lee Heights, the Cleveland neighborhood farthest from the city's police district, dealers ride city buses to the neighborhood to sell drugs. The impoverished neighborhood, which was middle class until the late 1970s, endures gun and knife fights and coexists with fear, although drug dealing recently has been on the decline.

"We see a broken world out our window every day," Miller says. "It's going to come knocking on our door if we don't reach out."

Lee Heights does reach out, driven by the gospel of peace—the only kind of witness Miller believes can make a difference in the city. "It's important to be Mennonite because of the peace message," he says. "People want to hear it. They're tired of the violence.

"This is why I believe that not just any Christian doctrine will do. In the city, it's not just any gospel, it's the gospel of peace that's needed here. Otherwise, we're going to keep fighting the same old problems."

Hands-on community ministry requires active participation. The 400-member, multiethnic congregation operates 20 ministries and still finds time for church council, choirs and the work of elders and ushers. About 60 percent of the congregation lives in the neighborhood.

Thanks to a focus on youth programs and evangelism, the 43-year-old congregation has outgrown its sanctuary, moving to two Sunday-morning services so it can continue to welcome new participants.

"Most of the people who look at our ministries can't believe how much we do with so few people and such limited resources," Miller says. "The people who do the most work are the most energized. I don't try to figure that out. I just praise the Lord that we have that kind of commitment."

Every participant is encouraged to consider leadership. "We work at leadership development at all levels," Miller says. "We tried outside searches [for leadership positions in the congregation], but it didn't work as well as training our own people."

One of those is associate pastor Regina Shands Stoltzfus, who grew up in Lee Heights. She has held various positions with Mennonite Central Committee and is now also a consultant with Mennonite Board of Missions.

The congregation places particular emphasis on encouraging its youth to consider pastoral ministry. "We encourage young people to commit to becoming pastors if they feel called to that, and we will find the funding to train them," Miller says.

"If we train them and they leave, that's OK," he says. "That's part of our evangelism. It's just part of our job to do the training."

—Bethany Swope of MBM News Service

Amish and Hutterite scholar dies at 82

GOSHEN, Ind.—John A. Hostetler, the internationally recognized scholar on the Amish and Hutterites whose popular books introduced Plain People to mainstream society, died Aug. 28 in Goshen. He was 82.

While working as a book editor at Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa., from 1953 to 1959, Hostetler wrote the 40-page booklet *The Amish,* which became Herald Press' all-time best-selling title with 762,000 copies in print. He also authored *Amish Life, Hutterite Life* and *Mennonite Life,* which remain in print for Herald Press.

Among his other writings are *Amish Society* and *Hutterite Society,* both published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hostetler was born Oct. 29, 1918, into an Old Order Amish family near Belleville, Pa. After his father was excommunicated, the family moved to Kalona, Iowa, in 1929. Hostetler joined the Mennonite Church in 1935 and graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College in 1949.

He started his professional academic career in 1959, when he joined the faculty of the University of Alberta in Edmonton. While there he began studies of the Hutterites and even lived with them for a time. Hostetler was a sociology and anthropology professor at Temple University, Philadelphia, for 30 years, until his retirement in 1985. He then became the founding director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Church of the Brethren-affiliated Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, serving from 1986 to 1990.

Hostetler

The funeral was Aug. 30 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen. Survivors include his wife, Beulah Stauffer Hostetler; daughters Ann Hostetler of Goshen, Mary Hoyt of Middletown, Pa., and Laura Hostetler of Oak Park, Ill.; seven grandchildren; and two sisters.

Struggling Palestinians welcome MCC's fowl play

JERUSALEM—Muhammad Abu Zneid sits in his living room surrounded by 12 children and holds a can of turkey from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). "This is the only meat we've had in months," he says.

The Abu Zneid family, in the Hebron district of the West Bank, was one of nearly 2,000 families to receive MCC canned turkey this summer as part of a food-for-work program. Recipients were Palestinian families suffering economically as Israeli roadblocks and checkpoints have prevented tens of thousands of Palestinians from entering Israel to work.

MCC joined with the Union of Agricultural Work Committee in the food-for-work program. Families struggling economically and those living in areas hard hit by Israeli shelling received MCC canned turkey, plus flour, rice, sugar and oil donated by Catholic Relief Services and the World Food Program, in exchange for work on land reclamation projects operated by the union. Each participating family received seven cans of turkey.

Abu Falah and his wife, Imm, reclaimed about two acres and planted fig trees and squash. "The meat is delicious," Imm says. Adds Abu, "But the squash we planted as part of this program will be even more delicious."
—Alain Epp-Weaver for MCC News Service

MCC photo by Mavis Olesen

Teacher education

Teachers in a refugee camp in Thailand review curriculum they recently developed. The teachers are Karen, an ethnic minority in neighboring Burma, who have fled their country's civil strife. Thirty-four teachers this spring participated in workshops led by Mennonite Central Committee volunteers Jim and Mavis Olesen. Participants are now able to train other teachers for the 3,000 children in their camp.

Indiana children build for service

As director of this summer's Christian education program at Hively Avenue Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., Louise Claassen wanted the children to have a hands-on experience in serving others. What better way, she thought, than by doing something for the students who attend the congregation's preschool during the school year.

So Hively Avenue children in grades four through eight, with adult supervision, spent Sunday mornings building a playhouse for the preschool's playground. Younger children helped with decorating the house, while adults donated their loose change to help pay for the project.

The playhouse was dedicated on Aug. 19.—*Mary E. Klassen*

Video producer segues from camera to classroom as he concludes 12 years with Mennonite Media

HARRISONBURG, Va.—On July 31, Jerry Holsopple officially wrapped up a 12-year career as executive video producer at Mennonite Media in Harrisonburg. Now an instructor at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, he leaves behind work in video, radio and the Internet.

"Technology has changed in the last 12 years, and I've tried to stay on top of things," Holsopple says. "Video, digital art, music—they all come together in the Internet."

The Internet was the medium for his last project. "Seeing Jesus," found on Mennonite Media's Third Way Café web site, shows several artists' interpretations of Jesus through many forms of media and includes images of people of all ages, genders and colors.

During his tenure, Holsopple produced two dozen full-length videos in addition to many shorter video and radio projects. He also developed a youth curriculum on peace and justice issues and founded Third Way Café, a bilingual web site devoted to dialogue on current social and religious issues, political commentary and information on the Anabaptist tradition and faith.

"I wanted to cover serious issues," Holsopple says. "These are the things that are important to me … They were at the core of what I was called to do at Mennonite Media."

His first video series was the acclaimed *Beyond the News,* which discusses social issues such as homelessness, racism, sexual abuse, television violence and immigration. "There was so much pain involved in these stories, although they were not hopeless," Holsopple says. "It really takes a toll on you."

Not all his projects were as emotionally difficult for him. Holsopple's favorite series is *Rhythms of Peace,* which uses stories, music videos and animation to communicate with a 7- to 10-year-old audience. "These videos were fun," he says. "I let my mind go to the edge of what I'm capable of creatively. *Rhythms of Peace* reflected who I am."

Holsopple came to Mennonite Media with a background in youth ministry, and several of his series have targeted children and young adults, most specifically *Rhythms of Peace* and *Whole People, Whole Earth,* which discusses peace theology and the environment. While some of the videos, such as *Beyond the News,* were intended for church distribution, they have reached a much wider audience through secular distribution for home and classroom use. Still other projects were intended to bring knowledge of Mennonites to non-Anabaptist and urban audiences.

That's the purpose of Third Way Café, Holsopple says. It aims to "speak to the public about who we are as Mennonites. It's a safe way [for non-Mennonites or nonreligious audiences] to get information. We put our voice into the marketplace of ideas."

Now full-time, Holsopple has taught at Eastern Mennonite University for several years, including classes on video editing, technology, Internet design, pop culture and contemporary film. He will continue to teach a combination of technical and philosophical aspects of media.

"Media can destroy the community," Holsopple says. "What do we do face-to-face to build community? Then how do we use media to make it real? I want to take my passion and pass it on, to help build the next generation."
—Rachel Lewis for MBM News Service

What do we do face-to-face to build community? Then how do we use media to make it real?

—Jerry Hosopple

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Building relationships key ministry component for South Korea workers

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Even in a society as technologically savvy as South Korea, face-to-face meetings are of primary importance. Although in different forms and different settings, they are what comprise ministry for Karen and Tim Froese, workers with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions with additional support from Mennonite Central Committee.

The Froeses—who have three children, Michelle, 15, Lucas, 14, and Stefan, 11—returned to Seoul last month after visiting family in Canada as well as mission partner churches in Canada and the United States.

Karen has spent much of her time in the past year involved at Seoul Foreign School, where her children attend and where the Froeses live. She assisted with volleyball and other sports and was a substitute physical education teacher in the middle school.

"This has given me a good chance to develop relationships with the middle-school kids, about 75 percent of whom are Korean-American," Karen says. "I've found it very interesting and feel like [working with these kids] might be a place where I fit.

"I've been asked to think about starting some kind of Christian club for middle-school kids, focusing on the girls since there is already something for the guys. It's supposed to be for both, but the Korean-American teacher who leads it finds it harder to relate to the girls."

Tim continues to work at strengthening a growing network of Anabaptist-related individuals and groups within South Korea.

"Up until the week before we left for Canada, there was an almost steady stream of people wanting to see me and talk to me," he says. "I had one meeting that I thought would be with one person but turned out to include five. ... They all wanted just to meet me as the official 'Mennonite representative' in South Korea."

The meeting had been arranged by the Bruderhof, a communal group with Hutterite roots that constitutes another strand in the growing Anabaptist web in South Korea.

"They are from the Darvel community in the United Kingdom," Tim says. "They regularly receive visitors there who want to see what the community and their communal life are like, but by far the largest percentage of their visitors are from South Korea. So about a year ago, they began sending some of their members to live in Korea for varying periods of time to learn more about the people and the culture."

GCMC photo

South Korea workers Tim and Karen Froese and their children: Michelle, 15, Lucas, 14, and Stefan, 11. The Froeses serve with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions with additional support from Mennonite Central Committee.

The Bruderhof members have been gathering periodically with the Froeses over the past year "to share and talk together about Koreans and their interest in Anabaptism," Tim says.

Tim has also spent time working on the creation of a Korea Anabaptist Center, "a place where we can invite people to come for meetings, study or research."

It has not been easy. "Because of transportation issues, we need a place that is decent in terms of being accessible to a wide variety of people," Tim says, "and you pay through the nose for that kind of space."

He had hoped to rent a property owned by a Methodist church in Seoul, but those plans fell through last month, putting the project back to square one.

In anticipation of the day when there will be an Anabaptist center, Tim has been building a collection of Anabaptist-related material. "I recently happened on a five-volume set, translated into Korean, from the Presbyterians on peace and peacemaking. It includes Glen Stassen's *Just Peacemaking* and *The Meaning of Peace* by Willard Swartley and Perry Yoder. Right now there are about 20 titles written by or about Anabaptists and translated into Korean."

Tim has on file the addresses of 130 of the 200-plus Christian publishers in South Korea and subscribes to a monthly booklist from Korean Christian booksellers. He spends time searching the web, which can be interesting because of the variety of spellings of the same word. "For example, Elmer Martens has three books translated into Korean, but each one transcribes the spelling of his name differently," he says.

Tim's library has about 600 volumes, including donations from North American libraries and archives and from Books Abroad. He has also received back issues of periodicals such as *Mennonite Quarterly Review.—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

The good and bad of communism's end

When the Berlin Wall fell 12 years ago, Christians rushed to openly proclaim the gospel of Christ in formerly communist countries. Meanwhile, capitalists rushed in to proclaim the gospel of free-market economy.

"People have been inundated with new things to buy and try," says Sharon Norton, an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker with a church plant in Halle in the former East Germany. "It's almost become an addiction to go shopping and buy lots of things just because you can. We hope that people will soon realize how empty possessions leave them feeling after the newness has worn off."

There has been another downside. After the reunification of East and West Germany, businesses were shut down and unemployment skyrocketed, leaving people bitter and hopeless, Norton says.

But a positive development is that people freely admit they don't know much about God and church. "You don't have to cut through layers of pretense and old religious traditions to get to the real issues," Norton says. "People are curious enough to give it a chance."—*EMM News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Sept. 11, 1943—Evacuation of Molotschna, the largest Mennonite settlement in Russia, begins as the German army retreats during World War II.

Hesston program has record enrollment

HESSTON, Kan.—At a time when concern rings through the church about a shortage of pastors, Hesston College reports a record number of students in its Pastoral Ministries program. Nine freshmen—the largest incoming class in 10 years—join five sophomores.

The Pastoral Ministries program is for students exploring pastoral ministry who don't or can't take four to seven years for college and seminary studies. Since the program started in 1985, 103 people have graduated. Most are serving in pastoral or other church positions.

The curriculum includes liberal-arts courses, overview courses on each part of the Bible and courses designed to nurture skills for pastoral work.

Lancaster, Pa., church gets Tenth Man grant

NEWTON, Kan.—West End Mennonite Fellowship of Lancaster, Pa., this summer became the 34th recipient of a Tenth Man grant from Mennonite Men when the congregation was presented a check for $27,000.

The congregation, which started meeting in the basement of Charlotte Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, moved into a converted bar last spring. West End treasurer Ann Martin says $20,000 of the grant will go to paying off the principal on the mortgage, which will save $31,000 in interest. The rest will be used for building improvements.

The Tenth Man program helps new congregations purchase or renovate their first meeting places.

New Mennonite Men officers are president Donald L. Schmidt of Newton, Kan.; secretary Lowell Detweiler of Akron, Pa.; and executive committee member Jean-Jacques Goulet of Montreal.—*GCMC News Service*

Indian Mennonites commission history project

ELKHART, Ind.—More than a century after its founding, the Mennonite Church in India has commissioned one of its bishops to write its history. Shant Kunjam was in the United States this summer doing research.

The 3,500-member Mennonite Church in India grew out of Mennonite Board of Missions efforts in that country. The denomination celebrated its centennial in 1999.

Kunjam, who has studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, has been the staff person for the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India since 1989. The organization promotes fellowship, peace education, voluntary service and church planting for the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ denominations in India.—*MBM News Service*

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Nov. 10, 2001
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Harrisonburg, Va.

Nov. 17, 2001
Goshen College
Goshen, Ind.

Events

Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Seminar, Oct. 4-6 in New York; "Breaking Cycles of Retaliation: Forgiveness as a Political Act?" For more information, contact the MCC U.N. office, 212-223-4062; <unoffice@mcc.org>; or visit <http://www.mcc.org/bi/un>.

Koinonia Mennonite Church 25th anniversary celebration, Oct. 20-21. For information, contact the church at 2505 N. Dobson Rd., Chandler, AZ 85224; 480-963-2416.

Births

Beck, Wesley Daniel, Aug. 13, to Brent and Launa (Rohrer) Beck, Elkhart, Ind.

Bender, Bridget Cerulea, July 20, to Donna Guardino and Dennis Bender, Cincinnati.

Bridge, Alexis Eryn, June 21, to Cheyenne (Hoadley) and Glenwood Bridge, Stuarts Draft, Va.

Fanatia, Austin Lewis, Aug. 17, to Denise (Coblentz) and Joe Fanatia, Kalona, Iowa.

Gingerich, Ingred Ann, Aug. 20, to Kendal and Sue (Roetlin) Gingerich, Riverside, Iowa.

Harder, Grace Katherine, Aug. 15, to Phil and Wanda (Bowman) Harder, Harrisonburg, Va.

Harris, Nathan Douglas, July 9, to Douglas and Yvonne (Monroe) Harris, Stuarts Draft, Va.

Kliewer, Lara Ann, Aug. 10, to Kristine (Jayberg) and Travis Kliewer, Kalona, Iowa.

Kolb, Faith Emmaline, June 27, to Carol (Snyder) and Marcus Kolb, Phoenixville, Pa.

Lile, Jeffrey Taylor, Aug. 15, to Janette (Duncan) and Jerry Lile, Harrisonburg, Va.

Martin, Samuel Robert, Aug. 16, to Shawn and Suzette (Martens) Martin, Wichita, Kan.

Masingila, Elizabeth Jahenda, July 9, to Mary (Hershberger) and Steve Masingila, Woodburn, Ore.

McDurmond, Abigail Grace, Aug. 25, to Tony and Yarasie McDurmond, Meridian, Miss.

Miller, Michael Lewis, Aug. 16, to Dorcas and Eldo Miller, Partridge, Kan.

Packull, Aaron Reinhold, Aug. 11, to Lisa (Schlegel) and Reiny Packull, Kitchener, Ont.

Pearce, Phoebe Kathleen, Aug. 6, to Amie (Belsley) and Jason Pearce, Morton, Ill.

Schrock, Noah James, July 31, to Dawn Schrock, Archbold, Ohio.

Slabaugh, Grant Ryan, Aug. 5, to Beth and Ryan Slabaugh, Hartville, Ohio.

Speigle, Lorna Danielle, Aug. 8, to David and Michelle (Smith) Speigle, Boswell, Pa.

Stoner-Eby, Samuel Micah, July 28, to Anne Marie and Scott Stoner-Eby, Lancaster, Pa.

Teater, Elaina Katherine, Aug. 7, to Linda and Troy Teater, Morton, Ill.

Thomas, Tyler, July 1, to Jamie McTonic and Jeremy Thomas, Johnstown, Pa.

Weaver, Lain Chadwick, Aug. 21, to Chad and Kathy Weaver, Fishersville, Va.

Marriages

Baker/Nice: Melissa Baker, Buchanan, Va., and Spencer Nice, Stuarts Draft, Va., July 28 at Williamson Road Church of the Brethren, Roanoke, Va.

Clemmer/Sell: Christopher Clemmer, Souderton, Pa., and Corey Sell, Souderton, Aug. 25.

Conrad/Schroeder: Nancy Conrad, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Ron Schroeder, Moundridge, Kan., Aug. 4 at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church.

Crippen/Oleyar: Eric Crippen, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Christina Oleyar, Colorado Springs, Aug. 4 at Colorado Springs.

Hatter/Thomas: Amy Hatter, Lyndhurst, Va., and Matt Thomas, Yuma, Colo., July 14 at Grace Community Church, Tempe, Ariz.

Hill/Rutherford: Barbara Hill, Staunton, Va., and Bob Rutherford, Stuarts Draft, Va., July 14 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.

Holst/Jantzi: Jessica Holst, Tavistock, Ont., and Matthew Jantzi, Wellesley, Ont., July 28.

Miller/Swartzendruber: Brynn Miller, Washington, Iowa, and Marshall Swartzendruber, Kalona, Iowa, Aug. 10 at Parkview Evangelical Free Church, Iowa City.

Moyer/Perez: Shawn David Moyer, Leola, Pa., and Cynthia Estrellita Perez, Mount Joy, Pa., Aug. 25 at Lancaster, Pa.

Riegsecker/Walther: Janelle Riegsecker, Middlebury, Ind., and Ike Walther, Jones, Mich., Aug. 4 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Unternahrer/Zook: Susanna Unternahrer, Wayland, Iowa, and Andre Zook, Telford, Pa., Aug. 3 at First United Methodist Church, Brownsville, Texas.

Deaths

Bixler, Elma B., 90, Orrville, Ohio, died Aug. 13. Spouse: Reuben Bixler (deceased). Parents: Amos and Ella Nussbaum (deceased). Survivors: children Vernice, Paul, Clair, Kenneth, David; 17 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Bontrager, LeRoy, 88, Hutchinson, Kan., died Aug. 16. Spouse: Esther Schrock Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Rudy and Lizzie Yoder Bontrager (deceased). Survivors: children Franklin, Gary, Berma Graber; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 20 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

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Bradshaw, William Anderson, 36, Hickory, N.C., died July 21. Spouse: Debbie Frisk Bradshaw. Parents: Laura Jean (deceased) and R.W. Bradshaw. Burial: July 23 at Hickory, N.C.

Keener, L. Donald, 65, State Line, Pa., died Aug. 11 of a heart attack. Spouse: Janet Horst Keener. Parents: George and Esther Keener (deceased). Other survivors: children Douglas, Carl, Sue Bender, Joy Martin, Renae Ladzinski; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.

Kolb, Helen Clemmer, 91, Spring City, Pa., died July 31 of a stroke. Spouse: Samuel G. Kolb (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Eva Clemmer (deceased); adoptive parents John S. and Anna Longacre (deceased). Survivors: children Linwood, Russell, Evelyn Parsons, Phyllis Miller, Wilma Keller, Emily Long, Gail Alderfer; 22 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City.

Miller, Alice Miller, 90, Middlebury, Ind., died July 17. Spouse: Levi Miller (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Katie Christner Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Louella Herschberger, Orla, Elva, Ernest, Sharon Hanna; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 20 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Miller, Raymond "Jack," 69, Middlebury, Ind., died July 24. Spouse: Louella Miller Miller. Parents: Emanuel and Lydian Slabaugh Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Cindy Thomas, Roger, Jeri Roggelien, Gregory; eight grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; one great-grandchild; four stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: July 27 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Miller, Ruby A., 72, Ontario, Calif., died Aug. 1. Parent: Ina Miller. Funeral: Aug. 4 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Upland, Calif.

Roth, Ronald, 67, Wayland, Iowa, died Aug. 11. Spouse: Jean Roth. Parents: Milton and Rachel Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children Christa Martin, Terri Walker, Dawn Goss; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Schlabach, Stanley E., 72, Parnell, Iowa, died Aug. 10 of a heart attack. Parents: Simon and Mary Hochstedler Schlabach (deceased). Survivors: fiancée Marlys Burkey; children Cindy Carter, Arlene Yoder, Rhonda Glandorf, Karen Sellers, Pamela Keefer; stepchildren Glen Cawthra, Emma Moon, Karen Roberts, Debrah Clubb; 27 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 14 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Stalter, Daisy, 83, Pigeon, Mich., died Aug. 10. Spouse: Timothy Stalter. Parents: Tom and Fannie Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Darwin, Delton, Galen, Gary, Randy; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Burial: Aug. 14 at Pigeon.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available! Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

classifieds

- **Grace Mennonite Church**, Pandora, Ohio, seeks applicants for ***minister of youth and Christian education***. Preferably full-time.
  Contact Angie Renner at 419-222-8532 or <rennerca@wcoil.com>.

- **St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship** is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** for our diverse, urban congregation. Interested candidates should contact Sheila at 636-584-0231 or email <yoderbaer@juno.com>; or contact our conference minister at <ilconmin@davesworld.net>.

- **This is your invitation to a Brunk Revival Reunion!** The Brunk Revival Board has planned a ***50-year reunion*** of Brunk Revival Crusades Nov. 17-18 at Harrisonburg, Va. The crusades began in 1951. On Saturday, Nov. 17, a banquet is scheduled for 7 p.m. in the EMU dining hall, where testimonies and reflections will be shared. Myron S. Augsburger will give the address. Sunday, Nov. 18, will be the 90th birthday of evangelist George R. Brunk II, who is scheduled to speak at 10 a.m. in Lehman Auditorium.
  Complimentary tickets for the banquet are now available upon request. Write Brunk Revivals, 1516 Hawthorn Circle, Harrisonburg, Va., 22802, for reservations, or call 540-434-4007.

- **Mennonite Mission Network** seeks a ***director of Mission Network Services*** to lead a team responsible for establishing communication networks among staff, conference mission leaders, congregations and mission workers. People-to-people networking and communication leader needed. The full position description can be found at <www.MennoniteMission.net>.
  Respond with letter of intent and resume to <staffrecruitment@MennoniteMission.net> or Mennonite Mission Network, Human Resources, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370.

- **Germantown Mennonite Historic Trust**, Philadelphia, seeks full-time ***executive director*** with skills in development and fund raising. GMHT owns and manages the historic Germantown Mennonite Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, built in 1770. Priority first three years focuses on enlarging our donor base and fund raising. Qualifications: strong interest in and knowledge of Mennonite history and heritage, possess fund-raising and development skills, training and/or experience in related fields. Must have good people skills, administrative ability, able to supervise staff.
  Send resume to Lamont Woelk, GMHT Search Committee, P.O. Box 448, Richlandtown, PA 18955-0448; 215-538-1452.

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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Healing the Wounds: One Family's Journey Among the Northern Cheyenne by Esther, Malcolm and Ann Wenger (Pandora Press Canada and Herald Press, 2001, $21) is a memoir of the Wenger family, Mennonite mission workers who worked among the Cheyenne in Montana from 1944 to 1966. Esther and Malcolm's prose accompanies poetry by their daughter Ann.

Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment by Christopher D. Marshall (Eerdmans, 2001, $24) explores the extent to which the New Testament addresses criminal justice issues and how those might be applied to mainstream society. He challenges Christians to imitate the way of Christ in dealing with both victims and offenders.

God Knows You're Stressed: Simple Ways to Restore Your Balance by Anne Bryan Smollin, *God Knows You're Grieving: Things to Do to Help You Through* by Joan Guntzelman and *God Knows You'd Like a New Body: 12 Ways to Befriend the One You've Got* by Carl Koch and Joyce Hall (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $11.95 each) are the first three volumes in a *God Knows* series. Each book in the series will focus on a question, problem, concern or issue often personally encountered in contemporary society. The first three focus on stress, grief and self-esteem.

Jewish Spirituality: A Brief Introduction for Christians by Lawrence Kushner (Jewish Lights, 2001, $12.95) guides Christians to the essence of Judaism in a way that people whose own tradition traces its roots to Judaism can understand and enjoy.

¡Aleluya, Amen! Celebrate the Church in Argentina (Mennonite Board of Missions/Commission on Overseas Mission, 2001) features instructions for a mission meal, multigenerational activities and a worship service. This mission educational packet is available free to all Mennonite congregations. Others may purchase it for $22. Call 800-999-3534 or email <Argentina@mennomedia.org>.

Anabaptist World USA by Donald B. Kraybill and C. Nelson Hostetter (Herald Press, 2001, $24.99) provides an overview of more than 60 Amish, Brethren, Hutterite and Mennonite groups. It also includes interpretive essays, graphics, photos, group profiles and state-by-state summaries.

The Praying Church Idea Book by Douglas Kamstra (CRC Publications, 2001, $25.95) has more than 200 ideas for prayer ministries. It also provides an introduction to how prayer should fit in the church's overall ministry.

Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway? (Alternatives for Simple Living, 2001, $3) has seven biblical reflections by noted speaker and writer Bill McKibben. The booklet also includes worshipful ceremonies, activities, an Advent calendar and suggestions for remembering the needy.

Helping Kids Include Kids With Disabilities by Barbara J. Newman (CRC Publications, 2001, $19.95) shares the author's 15 years of experience in inclusive education. It equips teachers, church activity leaders and kids with the information they need to practice inclusive education in the classroom community.

Recommended reading

The Myth of More and Other Lifetraps That Sabotage the Happiness You Deserve **by Joseph R. Novello (Paulist Press, 2001, $16.95) is eminently readable. Novello, a psychotherapist, weaves in stories of patients (under pseudonyms) he's treated to illustrate what he calls "lifetraps," which are "enduring patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving" that prevent us from experiencing full, happy lives. He defines happiness, often confused with pleasure, as "the serenity that comes from living a good and virtuous life." The key is to want what you have when you can't have what you want. Novello's steps to a full life are the titles of the book's chapters: understanding the past, detachment, living in the present, religion, spirituality, love and happiness. At times it feels simplistic, though he includes cautionary stories of patients who did not improve. While not necessarily profound, this book is a helpful guide to living more abundantly (see John 10:10).—*gh***

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Everett J. Thomas

Killing them softly

You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgement." But I say to you … if you say, "You fool," you will be liable to a hell of fire.—Matthew 5:21-22

It took about five years for my conscience to show me that I kill people. The lesson came through a dream that I have periodically. Each time I wake up horrified and wondering whether I have actually killed someone.

Here's the nightmare: At the same moment that I discover I brutally killed someone earlier in my life, I am given the opportunity to hide that fact so that no one but me will ever know about it.

In this dream, the knowledge of the murder has been hidden from me and I have no idea that I had committed such a heinous act. At the same time I am trying to deal emotionally with the shock, I must decide if I will confess the crime or hide it forever. The dilemma wakes me each time.

But the last time I had this dream, Jesus' warning in Matthew 5 came to me as an interpretation: I am killing people. I murder them by writing them off. I kill them by deciding they are jerks. I call them fools and wash my hands of any further relationships.

Jesus says this is the same as murder.

It is quite easy to decide that another person is no longer relevant, consequently eradicating them from our lives.

Now I see the reason Jesus condemned this behavior and have begun observing it in others in our church. In some conversations, we commit the same kind of murder. We become passionate about something we believe and find it incomprehensible that another Christian would not believe the same thing. At first we may try to see the other's point of view. We might even pray for them. But at some point, the emotional and spiritual dissonance becomes so great that we write them off. We decide they are fools.

There are incentives to decide that another person is no longer relevant, consequently eradicating them from our lives. Eventually, we live in a world peopled only by those with whom we get along. Of course, the most rewarding part of this strategy is that we get to create a whole universe of like-minded people with ourselves at the center.

These homicides happen most often in church life when we are arguing about what God wants us to believe or do. Whether it is discerning God's will with matters of worship style or women in leadership or abortion, when someone believes the opposite of what I believe, then it is tempting to discredit them as unfaithful, immoral or evil.

For example, those who like a traditional order of worship, with litanies and lectionary readings, are often derided as "liturgical" or Catholic. Conversely, those who like singing Scripture songs off the wall and raising their hands in worship are viewed as less educated, too emotional or spiritually immature.

It is around the topic of abortion, however, where Christians kill each other most. So volatile is this topic that we publish Ann Minter Fetters' article (page 4) with some trepidation. She is clear in her commitment to life for the unborn, although she is also willing to criticize some of the tactics used by pro-life activists.

Denominational documents are also clear about what we believe, but the subject has now been complicated by the use of stem cells from unused embryos. While I almost always trust the church in its discernment and accept it as God's will for the confusing world in which I live, I am not sure I can trust the church to talk about abortion yet. I am afraid too many people may die in those conversations.

The irony is that we confess to be a church that upholds the sanctity of all life. In our contending about such difficult issues, however, we kill each other softly.

So before we argue about who has a higher view of life and cares most about preserving it, we do well to understand the complete definition of death that Jesus reveals in Matthew 5. Jesus meant what he said, and his words apply to us today as much as they did to his disciples. May the nightmares end. —*ejt*

theMennonite

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fasting against the death penalty

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16 What awakens in us?

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Good news in the news

The editorial and a few letters in the Aug. 28 issue prompt me to write regarding issues of balance and listening arising out of my attendance at the delegate sessions at the Nashville 2001 convention.

A number of so-called Mennonites in several countries have been linked to drug trafficking in the past few years. That is only one reason why I thought it was unfortunate that we as a church didn't take the opportunity in our resolution supporting our Colombian brothers and sisters to issue a condemnation of all involvement in international drug trafficking and not just drug use. We should be calling for our government to make drugs and money laundering unprofitable for the high-level dealers and their friends, rather than just targeting the subsistence coca farmers and the "mules." Based on his comments at the Nashville workshop I attended, human rights lawyer Ricardo Esquivia from our sister church in Colombia might well have supported such a statement, since he noted that many of the international organized criminal elements who traffic in drugs manage to live safely within the United States. When speaking to Washington about exporting arms on pretext, let's speak about this issue, too. (By the way, there was no opportunity given at the delegate tables to even discuss the Colombia resolution. Let me also add my opinion that the practice of delegates only "reporting" from their tables cramps the Spirit.)

There was also a similar issue of balance raised on the delegate floor by a sister from Chicago who said, yes, it's OK to uphold the criminals on death row, but don't forget our neighborhoods besieged by crime.

It might be hard to be a church that gave equal time to abortion, crime, personal morality and international drug trafficking as well as the death penalty and militarism. But wherever there's news, there's good news.—*Bruce Liechty, Fresno, Calif.*

Together yet apart?

After reading the Nashville 2001 issue (July 17) cover to cover, I felt some of the same emotions I felt during the convention. While there were positive aspects of the gathering, I left feeling disturbed at how racism still saturates our church. During our worship times we were blessed by multiracial worship bands, worship leaders and preachers. Throughout the convention there was much talk of being "held together in Christ." Yet as I looked around me, I was surrounded by an overwhelmingly white church. Not only were convention participants overwhelmingly white, our newly merged church is still dominated by white power. White delegates did most of the reporting. Positions of power within Mennonite Church USA were filled by predominantly white candidates. Our Mennonite Church USA identity documents claim we are anti-racist, yet we live out a contradicting reality. Why?

We are so steeped in racism that many of us who are white can't even see it. When complaints were formally filed during Nashville, we as a church were ill-prepared to address the racism among us. Most convention participants never heard mention of the racial harassment that took place. When we finally hear about the blatant racial slurs that were called out or the instance where pizza was thrown at a person of color, we are shocked because we don't want to believe those things happen in our church. We categorize them as isolated incidents while ignoring the systemic racism that allows individual acts to continue. We point to the progress we've made instead of naming a reality that continues to destroy our church.

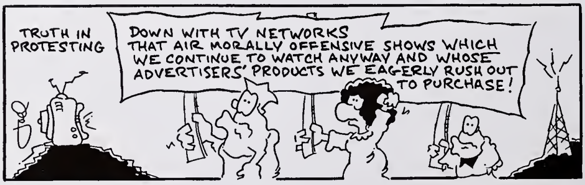
Until those of us who are white join in the fight against systemic racism (and not just against the individual, overt acts), we can never hope to truly fulfill God's vision for our church. How can we claim to be held together in Christ when racism is still tearing us apart? How can we effectively address racism when so many of us are still blinded by its power? *—Brenda Zook Friesen, Baltimore*

Proclaiming Jubilee

In any discussion of Jubilee, people seem to gravitate toward Leviticus 25, as in the article "Not a Level Playing Field" (Aug. 21). However, I would like to direct attention to Deuteronomy 15, a comparable Jubilee passage. It deals with two points, lending and servitude.

On the lending, there is remission of debts, which is to occur on a preset seven-year cycle.

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

It is possible that one might have incurred a debt in the fourth year of the cycle and still have it remitted in the seventh year, if I read the passage correctly.

On the point of servitude—I hesitate to call it slavery because it isn't our modern idea of slavery—the seven-year period begins with the purchase of the servant. At the end of six years, not only is the slave released from service but he or she is given resources to start making a living. This may include livestock or grain to use as seed. The time of service may even be thought of as job training.

This passage is not unlike the Sermon on the Mount.—*Phil Fuller, St. Paul, Minn.*

Questions and answers

Regarding the recent transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church into Mennonite Church USA and the sentiments about missionary purpose, there is a major question that remains unaddressed. Nearly all churches are missionary. Should Mennonite Church USA continue to expand its missionary work outside the United States? Or should it take a hard, close, deep look at the United States as it is today and, with the Great Commission in mind, transform itself into an Anabaptist confessional church, taking for its example Martin Niemoller and his Confessional Church at Dahlem, Germany? To answer that question would answer the Aug. 14 cover story, "Why Be Mennonite?" The great need for a confessional-type church in the United States is going unanswered. —*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

Why be Mennonite? Because Mennonites seek seriously an identity with the body of Christ in faith as well as in practice.—*Irvin B. Horst, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover photos
by Luke Golobitsh
and Religious News Service

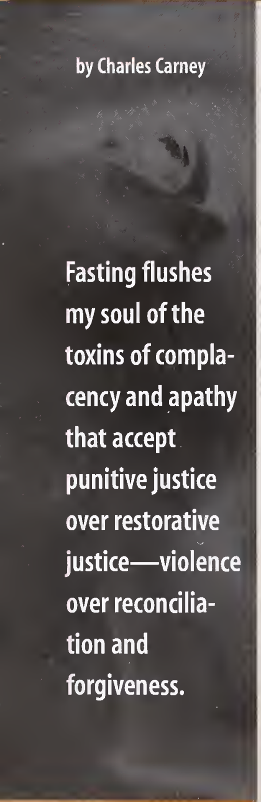
Not so fast

Reflections on a 10-day fast to end the death penalty

by Charles Carney

Most call it fasting; I call it slowing. When I fast, I slow down to contemplate the business-as-usual aspects of daily life. I rest more, pray more. I'm forced to face my addictions. Fasting also offers me glimpses into the pain that poverty brings to countless sisters and brothers locally and globally.

As the enemy of overconsumption and unequal distribution of wealth, fasting serves as an antidote to my "affluenza." I'm forced to give up my will, my ego, my drive to accomplish. It flushes my body of toxins. It also flushes my soul of the toxins of complacency and apathy that accept punitive justice over restorative justice—violence over reconciliation and forgiveness.



Fasting flushes my soul of the toxins of complacency and apathy that accept punitive justice over restorative justice—violence over reconciliation and forgiveness.

As a Mennonite volunteer at the Peace and Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas, Wichita, I coordinated and participated in a 10-day juice-only fast to call for an end to the death penalty. The fast, which began June 29 and ended July 8, coincided with the anniversary of the installment of a new death penalty law in Kansas on July 1, 1994.

Then Governor Joan Finney, a Democrat, refused to veto the law the state legislature had passed. During the period when she could have vetoed the law, at least five Kansans fasted, begging her to repeal the bill. She did not. Although no one has yet been executed in Kansas since the bill was enacted, there are now four prisoners on death row and several others waiting. If the wasteful, futile, resource-draining death penalty machinery keeps running in Kansas, it will only be a matter of time before the state kills in our name.

The idea for this year's fast originated with one of those who participated in the 1994 fast. Michael Poage, pastor of Fairmount United Church of Christ in Wichita, a consistent voice against the death penalty, suggested a fast several months earlier. When he did, a few of us knew we could not let the idea die, just as we knew we could not let one person die in Kansas' death chamber.

We decided to make the fast not only a personal journey but a public witness. To that end we scheduled meetings with state legislators. *The Wichita Eagle* carried an article about the fast in its Faith and Values section. A local radio station also interviewed Poage.

Here are excerpts from my "fast diary":

Thursday, June 28 (the day before the fast begins): "I fear that I'll break my promise not to eat or consume caffeine. I pray to the Holy Spirit for help, especially with the caffeine, to which I am thoroughly addicted.

"This evening, Donna, my spouse, and I go out to an all-you-can-eat buffet. I chow down. Two helpings of Chinese food, two Pepsis and two bowls of ice cream. It costs $7.95 per person, plus $1.35 apiece for our drinks. Plus a $3 tip. The bill comes to over $20. Is eating like this my right? If it is, shouldn't it be everyone's right? How many days' expenses would $20 U.S. buy for a destitute family in Africa?"

Friday, June 29: "I am limiting myself to three glasses of apple juice a day. I figure this adds up to 600 to 800 calories daily. Mysteriously, no headaches or withdrawal symptoms from not drinking coffee. The Holy Spirit is working. I struggle most at night. Frequently I crave my comfort foods, such as popcorn and ice cream. I stave them off by sheer force of will and pride. I feel empty, and there is an ironic satisfaction in that. Emptying myself feels healing.

"This morning we meet with state representative Judith Loganbill of Wichita. A member of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Judy supports our efforts. She expresses her frustration with being a legislator. She asks: 'Why are the people of Kansas willing to pour so much money and resources toward executing someone (execution costs three times more than putting a person in prison for life) yet so reluctant to pay for education for chil-

dren? Wouldn't it be smarter to put our resources and finances into the things that prevent crime [rather than] building prisons and death chambers?' "

Saturday, June 30: "I wake up this morning and experience a flash of panic. What am I doing? What did I get myself into? How am I going to do this for another nine days? I drink a glass of apple juice at 9 a.m. I drink another at 3 p.m. My stomach growls early and often."

Sunday, July 1: "This morning I speak to my home congregation, Mennonite Church of the Servant. I mention that fasting puts us in a humble place, where we no longer seek 'power-over' solutions. Fasting disarms not only the faster but those witnessing the fast. It's not an I'm-right-and-you're-wrong, in-your-face kind of demonstration. It does not point fingers outward but makes us rearrange things inside. Have I built death chambers in my heart that I'm not willing to look at?

"I believe God uses our fasting efforts in ways we will never know or perceive. After the service, Hank Kassam, who lost his grandfather to murder, tells me he is fasting the entire 10 days. Carol Rose, my pastor and friend, tells me she will fast the entire 10 days, except in special situations when she needs to give or receive hospitality. I am moved by these revelations. I feel the power of Christian community. Talking with Hank reminds me that opposing the death penalty is not just about connecting with those on death row. As Sister Helen Prejean so eloquently reminds us in her book *Dead Man Walking*, we must also enter into the pain with murder victims."

Monday, July 2: "I hit rock bottom today. My fasting now holds a no-end-in-sight quality. I feel a loss of control. Yet I know that my fasting time is limited. I have the day and time when I will eat again marked on a calendar. What about the millions of people for whom this lifestyle is interminable? What about the loss of control they experience? I pray this memory will impel me to redistribute my money and resources to those who need it. I hope it will deepen my commitment to living simply."

Tuesday, July 3: "When you don't have to fill up your day with preparing for, eating and cleaning up after three meals a day, lots of time is freed up. In fasting I've certainly cut out junk food. But I'm not happy with the ways I've found to fill up my life with other junk during the fast. For example, I watch too much TV. I believe TV is a big contributor to murder and vengeance—one of the reasons we have the death penalty. As we see violent images on the screen over and over, we numb ourselves into acceptance of these events. We also see people 'get even' over and over, until it seems like an acceptable response to violence."

Wednesday, July 4: "I reach a point of listlessness and irritation yet unseen. The temperature exceeds 100 degrees. Donna says I'm sharp and short today. I feel hot and hungry. But at least I have good drinking water. Since it is a holiday, I find today especially difficult. Our culture says we should have fun and indulge. We stop at Spangles so that Donna can get something to drink. As I watch someone order not just a hamburger, but a Supreme Burger with mushrooms, I feel the gap between the eats and eat-nots of the world."

Thursday, July 5, and Friday, July 6: "My mind is consumed with the thought of eating again.

"As I reflect on the last eight days, I am disappointed with several things. I am not happy with how I allowed myself a lack of discipleship in certain areas. I watched too much TV. I thought I would read more spiritual writings but instead read some shallow stuff. I envisioned myself supporting the other fasters but didn't do a good job of it.

"Still, I witnessed the best I could. I honored my commitment to not eat. I scheduled and attended seven meetings with legislators and talked on the phone with four more. But the most powerful aspect was the deepening of relationships, especially with those who fasted. Call it community-building by ordeal or solidarity in sacrificing together, but any way you shake it, there is joy in uniting as a Christian community toward a righteous cause.

"I also managed to read most of Charles Sheldon's classic *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?* I know that Jesus went to the desert from time to time. It was partly due to these intense desert experiences that Jesus became a victim of state execution."

Sunday, July 8: "At church I pray out loud during petition time in thanksgiving for all who fasted and all who supported us during the fast. I walk up the aisle to receive Communion. My pastor, Carol, has a big smile on her face. She holds up the bread and says with great joy, 'Charles, the body of Christ.' I smile back and say, 'Amen.' The phrase 'bread of life' takes on an even deeper meaning for me."

Charles Carney is a member of Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan.

Call it community-building by ordeal or solidarity in sacrificing together, but any way you shake it, there is joy in uniting as a Christian community toward a righteous cause.

A special church service

For the first time I understood a little better what it means to be on death row.

by Gardner C. Hanks

On Dec. 6, 2000, I was told there was a spot on my pancreas that was probably cancerous. A week later the diagnosis was confirmed, and I was told that I could expect to live no more than a couple of years.

Since that time I have received many notes of well-wishing, and many people have told me they would pray for me and my family. We have felt an overwhelming outpouring of love. But my most touching experience occurred at the Idaho Maximum Security Institution south of Boise.

I asked my friend Tim Cooper, who was conducting a church service for death-row inmates on Dec. 17, 2000, if I could join him. I have been a spiritual adviser for death-row inmate Jim Wood for five years, and he told me a number of the inmates wanted a chance to pray for me. Tom Creech, another death-row inmate, had also told me he wanted to pray a healing prayer for me and lay hands on me. The only way that could happen was for me to attend their church service.

Working with death-row inmates has helped me recognize more than anything else in my life that Jesus never gives up on us.

It was a bitterly cold day, and the service was held outside in a concrete recreation yard that exacerbates the wind and cold. Most of the inmates only had light blue jean jackets to wear over their prison uniforms. They were kept singly in a row of separate cages, and the wire mesh on the cages was such that they could only see the inmates in the adjacent cells and the people who were leading the service, who stood in front of the cages. It was hardly conducive to Christian fellowship, but that afternoon I knew God was with us.

After we sang and prayed, I talked about my situation. I told them that for the first time I understood a little better what it means to be on death row—to be reminded daily of my mortality. I moved along the row to hold hands with each inmate and let him pray for me. (A small "bean slot" in each cage allows the guards to handcuff the men before they are taken out of the cage. We could shake hands through these slots.) I started with Tom. I have never seen anyone pray as hard as he prayed for me that day.

As I moved down the row of cages, each inmate said his prayer for me, and we prayed together for each other. Max Hoffman, an inmate who recently joined First Mennonite Church of Nampa, Idaho, broke down in tears as we prayed together. Max had honored me by allowing me to be part of the service when he joined the church.

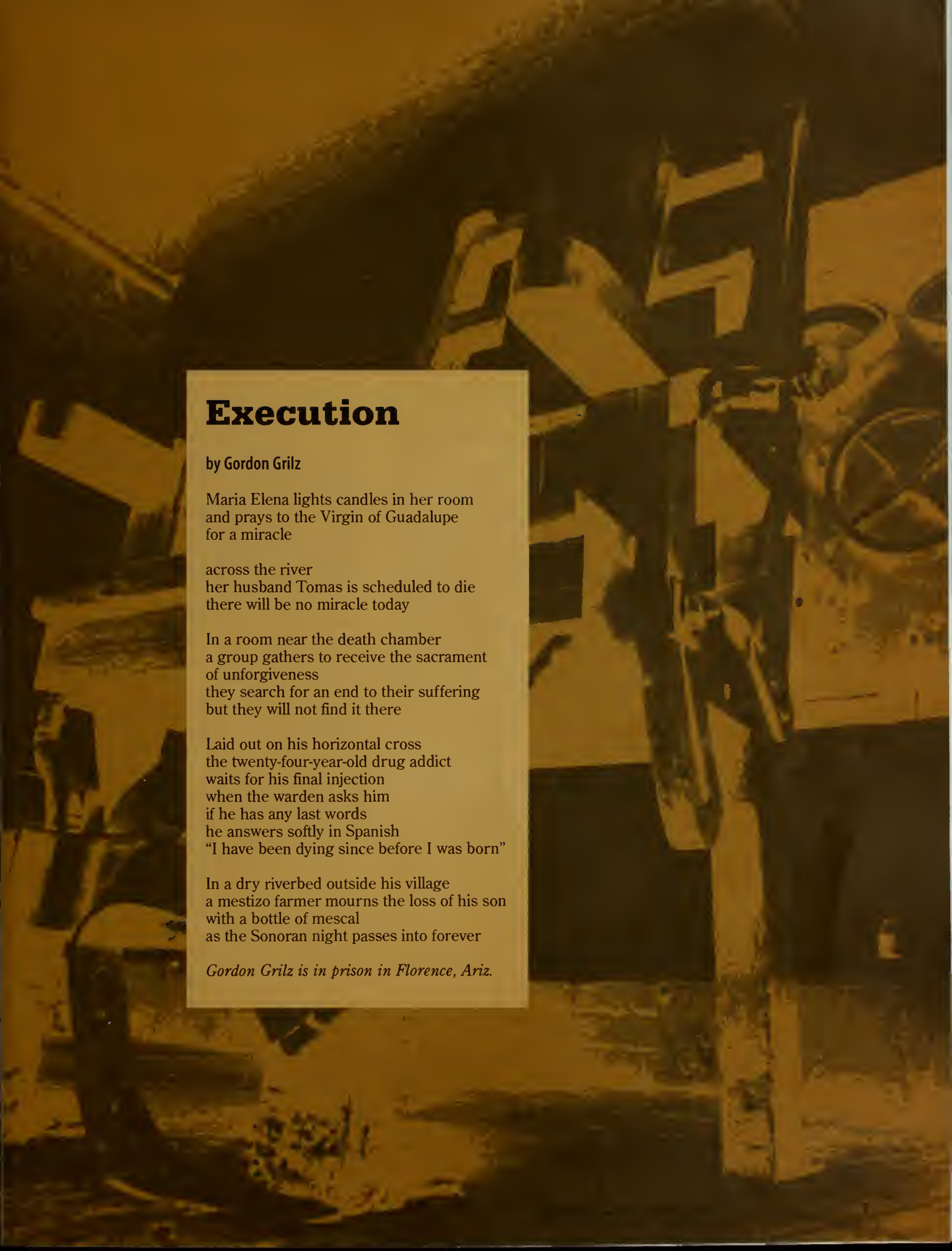
You might assume I had done something special for these men that led them to come out into the freezing cold in their thin coats to pray for me. That is far from the truth. Over the years I wrote a few letters to the editor opposing the death penalty. I occasionally said a kind word to an inmate's mother or wife. I had waved hello to them when I was visiting Jim. In other words, I simply tried to treat them as fellow human beings. It was these small kindnesses—nothing spectacular—that led these supposedly brutal and insensitive men to pray for me in my time of need.

Working with death-row inmates has helped me recognize more than anything else in my life that Jesus never gives up on us. Most people think of these men as hard, brutal and incorrigible monsters. The state of Idaho says they are too far gone to be saved, and therefore they must be put to death. It is true that many of them have done monstrous things, but I believe that if we could strip away all the toughness and anger they have built up over the years, we would still find the image of God in their heart of hearts.

A person in my position knows the value of redemption. For many years I wandered far from Jesus' way, and it was only the miracle of grace that brought me back, and in my situation now, all I can say is, "Thank God he did." If I were to deny the possibility of redemption for these men on death row, I would have to deny the grace that Jesus offered me.

We cannot know the future salvation story for any human being, no matter what evil they have done. That, in the final analysis, is the most important Christian argument against capital punishment. To deny the ability of the cross to redeem the sins of the "worst" sinner is to deny its ability to redeem our own sins. My Sunday afternoon with eight inmates from Idaho's death row convinced me of this more thoroughly than any theological textbook could.

Gardner C. Hanks is a member of Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship, Boise, Idaho.



Execution

by Gordon Grilz

Maria Elena lights candles in her room
and prays to the Virgin of Guadalupe
for a miracle

across the river
her husband Tomas is scheduled to die
there will be no miracle today

In a room near the death chamber
a group gathers to receive the sacrament
of unforgiveness
they search for an end to their suffering
but they will not find it there

Laid out on his horizontal cross
the twenty-four-year-old drug addict
waits for his final injection
when the warden asks him
if he has any last words
he answers softly in Spanish
"I have been dying since before I was born"

In a dry riverbed outside his village
a mestizo farmer mourns the loss of his son
with a bottle of mescal
as the Sonoran night passes into forever

Gordon Grilz is in prison in Florence, Ariz.

Agency workers in New York, Washington safe as terrorist attacks reverberate across the country

The devastating terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 prompted the evacuation of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) workers from their offices in New York and Washington. They were all reported safe, and some returned to work the next day.

Staff members in MCC's United Nations office in Manhattan were unaware of the events transpiring at the World Trade Center until they got a phone call from MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa., checking on their status. Kristin Mathies, an MVS worker in the office, says staff then looked out the window and saw smoke drifting their way. "That's when we knew something was going on," she says.

The office was evacuated shortly thereafter, and Mathies walked to her home, a 25-minute walk away. She and one other MVS worker live at Menno House, which is owned by Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship and is located about 40 blocks from the World Trade Center.

"We can go to the corner and see all the smoke and stuff," said house manager Gina Holsopple on the afternoon of the catastrophes. "We are right next to hospitals, and it's been constant sirens."

> We can go to the corner and see all the smoke and stuff. We are right next to hospitals, and it's been constant sirens.
>
> *—Gina Holsopple*

Menno House has about 10 tenants in addition to the two MVS workers, and they have all been accounted for. One resident is a firefighter, who was off-duty when the attacks occurred but spent the night of Sept. 11 working. Several co-workers and friends of residents spent the night at Menno House because they were unable to get home.

The MCC U.S. Washington Office, located on Capitol Hill, was also evacuated. Director J. Daryl Byler was at a meeting with a Middle East envoy near the White House when they received news of the Pentagon attack. "[The envoy] had just talked about how the process of retaliation and counterretaliation is so unproductive," Byler said.

The Washington Office was open the morning of Sept. 12, while MCC U.N. staff were deliberating about returning to their office.

Meanwhile, Mennonite congregations, colleges and communities across the country gathered to sing, pray and reflect on the unfolding tragedies.

Ryan Miller

Goshen (Ind.) College student Frances Miller lights a candle at a Sept. 11 campus prayer vigil held only hours after terrorist attacks hit New York and Washington.

While society may respond with hatred, God calls believers to love, Carlos Romero, vice president for student life at Goshen (Ind.) College, told a campus candlelight vigil hours after the hijacked airplanes slammed into the World Trade Center and Pentagon. He urged telling the federal government, "Do not retaliate on our behalf."

Beyond this country's borders, Mennonite Church Canada and Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg also held a prayer vigil for the United States. "Know that our hearts and minds are with you," said Dan Dyck, Mennonite Church Canada director of communications, in an email to denominational staff.

A statement from MCC called for prayer for the victims and their families and urged restraint in response to the attack.

"We must remind ourselves that not only did Christian brothers and sisters suffer and die in these tragedies, but other Christians may [also die] from a violent response to this disaster," the statement says. "We call Christians to remain prayerful and take positive steps toward healing."

Among other repercussions, the attacks led Mennonite Mutual Aid to postpone a sales conference scheduled for Sept. 14-15 in Montreal.

—Rich Preheim with Everett Thomas

Weekend of reflection and anticipation

GC, MBM events mark denominational transformation

Before several hundred people at Bethel College Mennonite Church in North Newton, Kan., Marilyn Miller had a confession to make.

"As a young girl growing up in the Mennonite Church, I would think, 'I wish I had been born a GC [General Conference Mennonite],'" said Miller, director of outreach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM). "I didn't have the noblest of motives for this. MC girls couldn't cut their hair, and they had to wear coverings and long skirts. I thought of the GCs, 'They believe the same things we do, but they don't make their girls look so different.' "

The former MC girl is now a GC. And in five months, she will be neither, as both groups will merge to form Mennonite Church USA effective Feb. 1, 2002.

Miller was one of the speakers at Labor Day weekend events in Kansas and Indiana reflecting on the past of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church and anticipating their new life together.

In Newton, Kan., nearly 200 people attended a Sept. 1 open house at the Main Street offices that have been GC headquarters since 1943. In the evening, current GC staff gathered for a banquet, then were joined by several hundred people for a worship service at Bethel College Mennonite Church.

"We were not always unified as we, or God, may have wished, for we didn't always understand the meaning of unity," said longtime GC leader Erland Waltner. "But God has brought us to this place."

Other speakers shared about their denominational involvement. "The General Conference Mennonite Church has meant calling, training and sending, for me personally and for Hispanic ministry," said Marco Güete, who has served with CHM and the Commission on Overseas Mission and is now an associate conference minister for Western District Conference.

Mennonite Board of Missions celebrated its work on Sept. 1, starting with a brunch and tours of MBM facilities in Elkhart, Ind. Forty people participated in a golf tournament that raised nearly $7,000 for MBM, and more than 300 people attended an evening banquet. At the banquet, representatives from the Argentina Mennonite Church—born in 1919 out of MBM's second overseas outreach—presented a Communion pitcher, goblets, tray and basket.

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Rich Preheim

Top: Former Mennonite Board of Missions worker Rod Hollinger-Janzen plays broom tag with Abraham Thorne during an MBM celebration in Goshen, Ind., on Sept. 2. The game originated in West Africa, where Hollinger-Janzen served. Bottom: Dale Schrag, secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council, portrays early 20th-century GC leader H.P. Krehbiel in welcoming visitors to an open house at GC headquarters in Newton, Kan., Sept. 1. Krehbiel owned the building that became GC headquarters in 1943.

In an afternoon service the next day at Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., MBM officials symbolically handed on their agency's legacy to the new denominational mission organizations. Stoles decorated with hand prints were presented to Mennonite Mission Network executive secretary Stanley Green, MMN board chair Lee Schmucker and Jack Suderman, executive secretary of Mennonite Church Canada's Christian Witness Council.

"The legacy of MBM will serve as part of the poetry of the future," Suderman said. "The new is never completely new, it always has significant versions of the past in it. And yet it is new; it is not only repeating what has gone before, but it rhymes. In poetry, a rhyme not only reminds us what has gone before, but it also allows us to guess what is coming next."
—GCMC/MC USA and MBM news services

> The new is never completely new, it always has significant versions of the past in it. And yet it is new; it is not only repeating what has gone before, but it rhymes. In poetry, a rhyme not only reminds us what has gone before, but it also allows us to guess what is coming next.
>
> *—Jack Suderman*

Muslims oust Mennonites, partner agency

Move comes as Christians face proselytization charges

KABUL, Afghanistan—Four Mennonites were among the workers forced to leave Afghanistan earlier this month when the country's Taliban government expelled a Christian relief and development organization.

The four—whose names are not being released due to security concerns—were appointees of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions and serving with International Assistance Mission (IAM). No official reason for the expulsion was given to COM-MBM officials. But it comes in the wake of the arrest and impending trial of expatriates from another organization on charges of proselytizing in the Muslim country.

MBM has been a member agency of IAM since 1966, when it was established to serve Afghans in the areas of health, economic development, education and rehabilitation. IAM, which is registered in Switzerland, has 117 expatriates from 17 countries and employs nearly 300 Afghans.

A Harrisonburg, Va., couple was already in the United States on a North American assignment when the announcement came. They had planned to return this month to the capital city of Kabul, where they worked in finance and mental-health programs. They are now awaiting word from IAM about their next assignment. A second couple, from Kidron, Ohio, was working in English training and renewable energy source development. They are awaiting reassignment with COM-MBM. A fifth worker, from Philadelphia, returned to the United States in July upon completion of her mental-health assignment.

Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Aug. 31 sealed all IAM offices and projects and gave expatriates 72 hours to leave the country.

"The International Assistance Mission is deeply saddened by the decision of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to send all IAM personnel out of the country, which will have severe and negative effects on the people of Afghanistan," says IAM executive director Harri Lammir. "IAM remains committed to the mutually agreed protocols with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and to the alleviation of human suffering and the development of Afghanistan, and asks for an opportunity to resume discussion [for resuming work in Afghanistan]."

IAM estimates that as many as 700,000 Afghans will be affected by the agency's expulsion, including 200,000 people in drought-affected areas who were to receive food assistance and 150,000 outpatients in eye-care clinics. Plans for 2002 called for expanded relief efforts in northern and central Afghanistan, which would have benefited 300,000 people.

"We have no intention of changing or concluding our membership and partnership with IAM as long as IAM continues to function in giving assistance to Afghanistan and the Afghan people," says John F. Lapp, MBM-COM program administrator for West Asia and the Middle East.

IAM's services included providing the primary provider of medical and surgical eye care in the country, a physiotherapy school, English-language schools, child health-care programs, schooling for blind children and adults, community development, mental health care, renewable energy source development and disaster management. IAM focused on training Afghans to eventually take over long-term programs.—*MBM News Servivce*

Tax-exempt status prompts MCC gift

Mennonite Central Committee's new Central States regional office in North Newton, Kan., was recently granted tax-exempt status. But MCC isn't banking on the money saved.

The local school board on Sept. 4 received a big surprise in the form of a $2,000 check from MCC Central States. The money was calculated to be how much of their property taxes would have gone to education.

"We decided that some of the priorities we work at on a global scale included education," says MCC Central States director Ron Braun. "We have children that go to school and many benefits we get from the school system. We felt it our responsibility to share in ensuring that the community keep those kind of services."

Said school board president John Esau: "To me, this is monumental. I don't know that this has ever happened before. This is a community suppporting a community."
—*Newton Kansan*

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GOSHEN COLLEGE CULTURE FOR SERVICE

From Canada to Ukraine to Mexico, COM couple encourages connections for mission initiatives

NEWTON, Kan.—Dorothy and Jake Unrau's work in Ukraine has built a network of connections broader than just between them and the people with whom they work.

The Unraus work with the Commission on Overseas Mission as pastoral couple with the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Zaporozhye, Ukraine. Like most, if not all, COM workers, the Unraus have mission partners—congregations that give them both prayer and financial support and with whom they correspond regularly. Unlike any other COM workers, however, the Unraus have mission partner congregations in northern Mexico.

The Alberta couple, home for the summer on a North American assignment, spent Aug. 18-26 visiting these three congregations, near the village of Cuauhtemoc, which make up the German-speaking membership of Conference of Mennonites in Mexico (CMM), affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

COM put the CMM congregations in contact with the Unraus shortly after Dorothy and Jake first went to Ukraine in 1998. The congregations were interested in mission partners who had a German- or Spanish-speaking ministry.

The Zaporozhye congregation was begun nine years ago by and for people of German Mennonite background, but today almost all new members are Russian and Ukrainian.

The Unraus say they were warmly welcomed by CMM. "We felt just like we'd known each other for years," Jake says.

They were pleased by the turnout at their evening programs. "In Canada, it seems like it was mostly the older people, those who have some direct experience or knowledge of mission, who would come," Dorothy says. "In Mexico, people of all ages came to the programs, and there was especially high interest among the youth and young people."

One of the most common questions they were asked was, Who is left in the church since so many German Mennonites have left the former Soviet Union? "As in most of our presentations, the people in Mexico were concerned about the economic situation and the political stability in Ukraine," Dorothy says. *—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC/MC USA News Service*

Dorothy and Jake Unrau

Join us on the transformation journey...

"We have been blessed with an opportunity [illegible] anew at our vision, core values and [illegible] church planting experience, it allows us [illegible] commitment to God and each other."

—Ervin Stutzman, moderator
Mennonite Church USA

"God has blessed our church in many ways. With congregations and delegates strongly affirming our direction of becoming a missional church, we can now work together to fund and implement this vision."

—D. Duane Oswald, moderator-elect
Mennnonite Church USA

envisioning
healing & hope

Fund our future together
Sunday, September 30

Mennonite Church USA

this date in Mennonite history

Sept. 18, 1798—The Swiss canton of Aarau permits Mennonites refusing to swear civic oath to instead say,"We promise. . . . "

Longtime seminary professor dies at age 82

ELKHART, Ind.—Jacob J. Enz, professor emeritus of Old Testament and Hebrew at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, died Sept. 9 at age 82.

He started teaching at the General Conference Mennonite Church's (GC) Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago in 1954 and continued with the school when it moved to Elkhart to form AMBS with the Mennonite Church's Goshen Biblical Seminary. He retired in 1984. Prior to his seminary career, Enz taught at Goshen (Ind.) College in 1947-48 and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., from 1948 to 1950.

In addition to his academic career, he was a member of the GC Board of Education from 1956 to 1965, acting editor of *The Mennonite* from 1948 to 1950 and GC editor of *The Herald Teacher* from 1950 to 1953.

Ethiopian leaders studying at U.S. schools

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia—Six members of the Meserete Kristos College, the Mennonite school in Ethiopia, are studying in graduate programs in North America this fall. Two are at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va.; two are at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif.; one is at Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University; and one is at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, which has several campuses in Massachusetts.

In addtion, four other Ethiopian Mennonite leaders are studying in the United States, two at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., and two at Eastern Mennonite University.—*MWC News Service*

Goshen student wins hymn contest

GOSHEN, Ind.—A Goshen College senior's arrangement of an 1879 hymn has earned him first place in a composition contest to promote American hymnody among young composers. Mike Tice's winning entry was an arrangement for brass quartet of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." He received $800 from the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, based in Wheaton, Ill., which sponsors the annual contest.

MCC contributes more to Indian flood victims

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee is contributing $18,000 for 300 families in eastern India who suffered severe flooding in July. This is in addition to $50,000 contributed earlier. The most recent assistance, which will be distributed by an Indian nongovernmental organization, will go for rice and seeds.
—*MCC News Service*

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RUSSIA and UKRAINE (August 3-18)
GERMANY (September 27 - October 10)
From PENNSYLVANIA to ONTARIO: Trail of the Conestoga (October 24-29)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL (October 26 - November 8)

2002 TOURS
SERVICE TOUR in SUNNY JAMAICA (January 25 - February 3)
AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND (February 8-28)
HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
JORDAN, ISRAEL, VIENNA and BUDAPEST (February 15-28)
SERVICE TOUR to ISRAEL/PALESTINE (April 5-18)
PARAGUAY, BOLIVIA and PERU (April 6-22)
SPECTACULAR SCANDINAVIA and Its FJORDS (June 17 - July 1)
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 19 - July 1)
EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 12-29)
MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)
EASTERN CANADA (August 2-12)
SWISS GLACIER EXPRESS (August 12-26)
SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)
VIETNAM (November 8-25)

2003 TOURS
MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE in AFRICA (August)

Events

Kings View Mental Hospital former employee reunion, Oct. 13, Reedley, Calif. For reservations, contact Roger Miller at 559-638-4965 or <rogerdmiller@msn.com>.

Brunk Revival Crusades 50th anniversary reunion, Nov. 17-18, Harrisonburg, Va. For information, contact Brunk Revivals, 1516 Hawthorn Circle, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-434-4007.

"Restorative Justice: Prophetic, Pastoral or Perpetuating?" seminar Nov. 30-Dec. 1, sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. and East Coast, and Franconia and Eastern District conference peace committees. For information, contact MCC East Coast at 717-859-3889; email <crc@mcc.org>.

Sixth Cincinnati Mennonite Arts Weekend, Feb. 1-3, 2002. The theme is "Building Bridges: Artists and the Congregation." For information, contact Hal Hess or Christine Schumacher at 513-351-8785; <schess@cinci.infi.net>.

Workers

Hoober, Kristen, was installed Sept. 2 as youth pastor at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Births

Dick, Matthew Jonathan, Aug. 3, to Nancy and Ron Dick, Steinbach, Man.

Funk, Tieghan Carter, Aug. 8, to Brad and Kimberley Funk, Steinbach, Man.

Keener, Victoria Lynn, Aug. 19, to David and Joylynn (Heese) Keener, Lancaster, Pa.

Leichty, Emma Roberta, July 17, to Deon and Jo (Sedore) Leichty, Crawfordsville, Iowa.

Martens, Abigail Georgia, Aug. 23, to Dale and Monica Martens, Steinbach, Man.

Martin, Elizabeth Grace, July 19, to Sheryl (Sensenig) and Steve Martin, Ephrata, Pa.

Neufeld, Rionnah Abrielle, July 26, to Elizabeth and Philip Neufeld, Akron, Pa.

Schloneger, Josh Paul, Aug. 24, to Brenda (Marks) and Steve Schloneger, Louisville, Ohio.

Yoder, Noah Andrew, Aug. 1, to Debra Clark and Rodney Yoder, Reedsville, Pa.

Zehr, Ethan Jared, Aug. 19, to Jared and Shellie Zehr, Croghan, N.Y.

Marriages

Aumiller/King: Daniel Aumiller, Reedsville, Pa., and Amy King, Reedsville, Aug. 4 at Niagara Falls.

Eby/Persing: Everett Eby, Elkhart, Ind., and Katie Persing, Elkhart, Aug. 30 at Elkhart.

Edbom/Kehler: Nina Edbom, Piney, Man., and Randy Kehler, Altona, Man., Aug. 11 at Altona.

Gaeddert/Isaac: Susan Gaeddert, Georgetown, Ky., and Stuart Isaac, Newton, Kan., Aug. 4 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Kaegy/Kanagy: Rolf Kaegy, Germany, and Kathleen Kanagy, Hartville, Ohio, Aug. 24 at Hartville.

Kauffman/Schrock: Rudy Kauffman, Bellefontaine, Ohio, and Ravonn Schrock, Exeland, Wis., Aug. 4 at Birchwood, Wis.

Kipe/Martin: Janet C. Kipe, Chambersburg, Pa., and Nelson L. Martin, Chambersburg, Aug. 25 at Mount Rock Brethren in Christ Church, Shippensburg, Pa.

Klassen/Regier Neufeld: Judith Klassen, Altona, Man., and Simon Regier Neufeld, Winnipeg, Aug. 11 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Leichty/Nachtigall: Marena Leichty, Wayland, Iowa, and Chris Nachtigall, Elkhart, Ind., July 21 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Leifheit/Miller: Crystal Leifheit, Uniontown, Ohio, and William R. Miller II, North Canton, Ohio, Aug. 25 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Sancken/Schumm: Joni Sancken, Tolono, Ill., and Steve Schumm, Tavistock, Ont., July 28 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Siegrist/Springer: Mary Siegrist, San Jose, Ill., and Douglas Springer, Hopedale, Ill., Aug. 25 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Buller, Priscilla Mast, 74, Kalispell, Mont., died July 27 of cancer. Spouse: Jeff C. Buller (deceased). Parents: Silas and Elma Mast (deceased). Survivors: children Twila, Andy, Ellen Gibson, Frieda Kauffman, Sarah Gunderson, Lena Dresbach, Leland; 19 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Kalispell.

Esch, Margaret (Maggie) Wideman, 95, Glendale, Ariz., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Lewis Esch (deceased). Parents: Menno and Lydia Gascho Wideman (deceased). Survivors: children Eldora Eicher, Marilyn Ludwig, Clayton, Dwight; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 28 at Glencroft Community Church, Glendale.

Friesen, Maria, 85, Steinbach, Man., died Aug. 3. Funeral: Aug. 8 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Glick, Margaret E. Heckman, 92, Belleville, Pa., died Aug. 10. Spouse: Jesse B. Glick (deceased). Parents: John and Amanda Brubaker Heckman (deceased). Survivors: children Jesse Jr., John; two grandchildren. Funeral at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Godshall, William K., 81, Souderton, Pa., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Doris Mae Stout Godshall (deceased). Parents: William and Sallie Godshall (deceased). Survivors: children Ralph, James, Gerald; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 28 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Gundy, Glenn, 95, Washington, Ill., died Aug. 17. Spouse: Ruth Reichardt Gundy. Parents: Albert and Bertha Rhodovi Gundy (deceased). Other survivors: children Homer, Glenda Rediger, Lois Reeb; 10 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

Harnish, Clayton, 84, Lancaster, Pa., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Mildred Sangrey Harnish. Parents: Enos C. and Ella Kreider Harnish (deceased). Other survivors: children Carl, Jeannette Dillman, Evelyn Hassel, Joyce Sinopoli; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hertig, Donnie, 70, Wayland, Iowa, died June 31 of cancer. Spouse: Jean Davison Hertig. Parents: Chris and Minnie Boese Hertig (deceased). Other survivors: children Vicky, Denise Mikkelsen; three grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Hildebrandt, Isaac, 88, Steinbach, Man., died Aug. 1. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Roth, Lester, 86, Hesston, Kan., died Aug. 19. Spouse: Grace Boshart Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Jim, Joyce Sandersfeld, Lavonne Mullet; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Swope, Lois Lavinia, 89, North Lima, Ohio, died Aug. 25 of heart failure. Spouse: Paul Swope. Other survivors: children Verna Kerns, Ruth Ann Jantzi, Donald; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Burial: Aug. 29 at North Lima, Ohio.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event. Send them to:
The Mennonite,
P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114;
fax 316-283-0454;
email <theMennonite@gcmc.org>

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Grace Mennonite Church**, Pandora, Ohio, seeks applicants for ***minister of youth and Christian education***. Preferably full-time.
  Contact Angie Renner at 419-222-8532 or <rennerca@wcoil.com>.

- **Perryton Mennonite Church**, a loving, caring congregation in the rural Texas Panhandle, is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Opportunities for growth and outreach. Interested people may contact Doug at 806-435-4558 or <ptnmenno@hotmail.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Denver, Colo., has an immediate opening for a full-time ***custodian/maintenance/security person***. Compensation package includes salary, apartment, utilities and medical.
  Call 303-892-1038 or email <fmcdenver@aol.com> for more information.

- **MENNO Project** seeks 10 people to participate in a two-week ***work camp at Cachipay (Colombia) Retreat Center***, Feb. 2-6, 2002. Carpentry, construction, plumbing, sewing, painting and cleaning skills a plus. Sponsored by Commission on Overseas Mission.
  Contact Karen McCabe-Juhnke, 316-283-5100; <KarenMJ@gcmc.org>.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** (northeastern Pa.) ***singles' retreat***, Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2001. Capture what it means to live life to the fullest measure that God intends, with speaker Ron Kohl, who speaks from the authority of the single experience. Christian comedian David Dean will capitalize on the God-given gift of laughter. Package: $115.50/person.
  Call 800-822-7505.

- **Mennonite Mission Network** seeks a ***director of Mission Network Services*** to lead a team responsible for establishing communication networks among staff, conference mission leaders, congregations and mission workers. People-to-people networking and communication leader needed. The full position description can be found at <www.MennoniteMission.net>.
  Respond with letter of intent and resume to <staffrecruitment@MennoniteMission.net> or Mennonite Mission Network, Human Resources, P.O. Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370.

- **Camp Luz**, Orrville, Ohio, seeks a full-time ***camp director*** ASAP. Send resume to Ken Neuenschwander, P.O. Box 14, Kidron, OH 44636; daytime phone 330-857-2871; nights 330-857-1171.

- **Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church** seeks a 1/4-time ***associate pastor for youth***. Our growing congregation needs a dynamic, creative person to lead middle and senior high youth activities and programs. Applications encouraged by Oct. 20, 2001. Position open until filled.
  To request application materials, please contact the church at 303-443-3889 or email <bouldermennonite@juno.com>.

- **The Oakwood Foundation** in north central Indiana is seeking an experienced full-time ***program director*** to develop lectures, encounters, retreats and the arts. Visit <www.oakwoodpark.org>; email resumes and job description requests to <scott@oakwoodpark.org>.

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, is urgently seeking a ***qualified accountant (CPA level)*** to fill a staff vacancy. This position begins Jan. 7, 2002. Rosslyn is a joint effort of Mennonite, Southern Baptist and Assemblies of God missions in eastern Africa, yet the school is nondenominational in faith and practice. Rosslyn serves over 440 students K-12, and it is fully accredited with MSA and ACSI.
  Email Dena Brent, Superintendent, <DenaB@rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke> or airmail to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

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by Gordon Houser

Our nation is in the midst of a debate about the death penalty. Too often ignored in this debate are the victims of violence. A new book by Howard Zehr, who teaches in the conflict transformation program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., helps remedy that neglect.

Five years ago, Zehr published a photo-interview book, *Doing Life: Reflections of Men and Women Serving Life Sentences* (Good Books, 1996), which drew attention to people hidden from our eyes.

His new book, *Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims* (Good Books, $29.95 hardback, $18.95 paperback), due out next month, also reveals subjects we don't usually give our attention. It includes 75 artistic photographs of people—including at least two Mennonites—who have endured violence done to them or loved ones. Their gripping stories make it difficult to put the book down.

In Part II, Zehr offers his own analysis in "Victimization and the Obligations of Justice." He draws on his more than 20 years of pioneering the field of restorative justice to outline what victims of violence experience.

He writes, "The experience of violence, then, calls into question our most fundamental assumptions about who we are, whom we can trust and what kind of world we live in." He goes on to describe victims' journeys toward meaning, honor, vindication and justice.

Unfortunately, the criminal justice system in the United States does not help people in these journeys. Zehr quotes author Judith Lewis Herman: "If you set out to design a system for provoking intrusive post-traumatic symptoms, one could not do better than a court of law."

Restorative justice has two basic principles, writes Zehr: "First, the ones harmed—victims and survivors—should be central to justice. … Second, the question of offender accountability should focus on encouraging offenders to understand and, to the extent possible, take responsibility for that harm."

Zehr writes that "victims' voices should be heard, in all their diversity and complexity, even when they are difficult to hear, even when we are uncomfortable with their positions." This book honors those voices by including them, with their faces.

An important part of the healing for many of these courageous people is their coming to forgive. Conrad Moore, whose son was murdered, writes: "Forgiving was our only opportunity to exercise control in the whole process. When you forgive, you actually have some power. It's like a sign of relief."

Every congregation, at least, should have this important book.

videos

State and Main (R) satirizes Hollywood and numerous other pretentious characters while asking questions about truth and goodness. Writer and director David Mamet crafts his usual intelligent, surprising story with crisp, funny dialogue. A film crew sets up in a small town and cultures clash. The screenwriter finds love and morality from a local woman.

Spy Kids (PG) is a fun, adventuresome, funny tale that doesn't take itself too seriously. It shows how parents and kids underestimate each other.

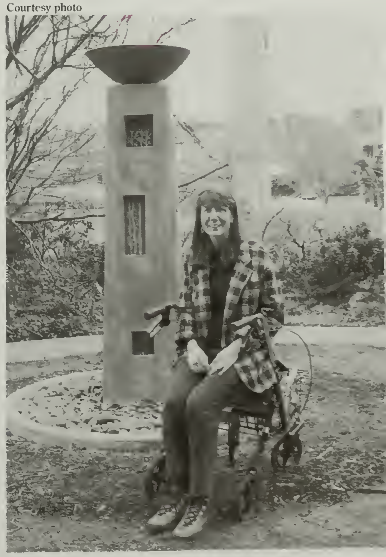
books

Orbis is publishing a Traditions of Christian Spirituality Series. According to editor Philip Sheldrake, "The books seek to provide accurate and balanced historical and thematic treatments of their subjects" while making "connections with contemporary experience and values without being artificial or reducing a tradition to one dimension." Of the nine volumes published, I've looked at three: *At the Fountain of Elijah: The Carmelite Tradition* by Wilfrid McGreal (1999, $13), *Poverty and Joy: The Franciscan Tradition* by William J. Short (1999, $13) and *Journeys on the Edges: The Celtic Tradition* by Thomas O'Loughlin (2000, $14). These books provide information and inspiration. Each tells the history of a particular tradition, including the people who carried its core beliefs forward. Learn where Carmelites get their name. Learn why the Franciscan movement resists attempts to turn it into a system. Search for an answer to O'Loughlin's question, Is there a Celtic spirituality? Learning about these traditions helps us live faithfully within our own. As McGreal writes, "Spirituality is not a cosy option but is the call to respond to the gift of God's love by our involvement in what is often a dark and difficult world."

art

Artist Sandra Zeiset Richardson (right), a member of Seattle Mennonite Church, at the request of Seattle University, a Jesuit school, designed a memorial to the six Jesuit priests, their cook and her teenage daughter, who were killed by government soldiers in San Salvador, El Salvador, in November 1989. Her piece, *Bowl of Tears—The El Salvador Martyrs Memorial*, is a seven-foot concrete column with a large bronze bowl on top. Around the column are 15 recessed alcoves with representations, in ceramic tile, of the eight martyrs. Another alcove has a tile in memory of Archbishop Oscar Romero, killed in 1980. Around the column is a bed of stones representing the 75,000 Salvadorans killed in the 12-year civil war. "As it rains, the bowl will fill with water" and flow over, Sandra says, "leaving a trail of tears."

Courtesy photo



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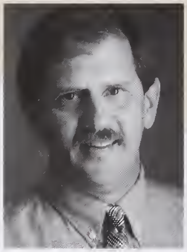

Everett J. Thomas

What awakens in us?

The clouds of smoke, the pillars of fire,
the descending rubble
like a mini-Hiroshima
are etched upon my brain
with unthinkable carnage yet to come.
Peace to you stricken with shock and grief.
Peace to you laughing over what you feel is victory.
Peace to you planning revenge.
—from "A Litany for September 11, 2001,"
by Doug Krehbiel

As I write this, people are still dying in New York City from injuries caused by the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Thousands have died already, including 266 on the hijacked airliners used to incinerate the Pentagon and the WTC towers and some 200 firefighters buried alive when the towers fell.

We go to press with this issue of *The Mennonite* as the first stories are emerging about the individuals who were victims of this terror and the heroics of those who died trying to save lives.

Government leaders are calling this event another Pearl Harbor. During CBS news coverage moments after the jetliner struck the Pentagon in Washington, a correspondent recited the ominous words of a Japanese general after Pearl Harbor, who worried, "We may have awakened a sleeping giant."

The place to begin loving our enemies is to explain to our children why others hate us and our country so much.

What will this event awaken in us?

Within hours after the catastrophes, Goshen (Ind.) College students gathered in impromptu prayer groups. At a candlelight vigil later in the day, a faculty member reported on the themes that emerged from the students' prayers. There were grief and pain for the victims' families. There were prayers for strength and courage for those providing care. There were acknowledgments that many others around the world have experienced and continue to experience terror of this sort.

But also included in the students' prayers was a haunting question: Why is this hate and anger directed toward our country?

How do we answer such a question from our children? How we respond will depend on what awakens in us.

Moments after the attacks in Manhattan and Washington, a suspect was named. Osama bin Laden, the Saudi dissident who has apparently been given protection by the ruling Taliban in Afghanistan, is now public enemy number one. Will we soon see planes and troops and tanks deployed into Afghanistan to hunt down this man and his followers?

At the end of the day on Sept. 11, President Bush signaled as much. In a televised address from the White House, the president promised the nation, "We will make no distinction between terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

But this does not answer the question our children ask, "Why is this hate and anger directed toward our country?"

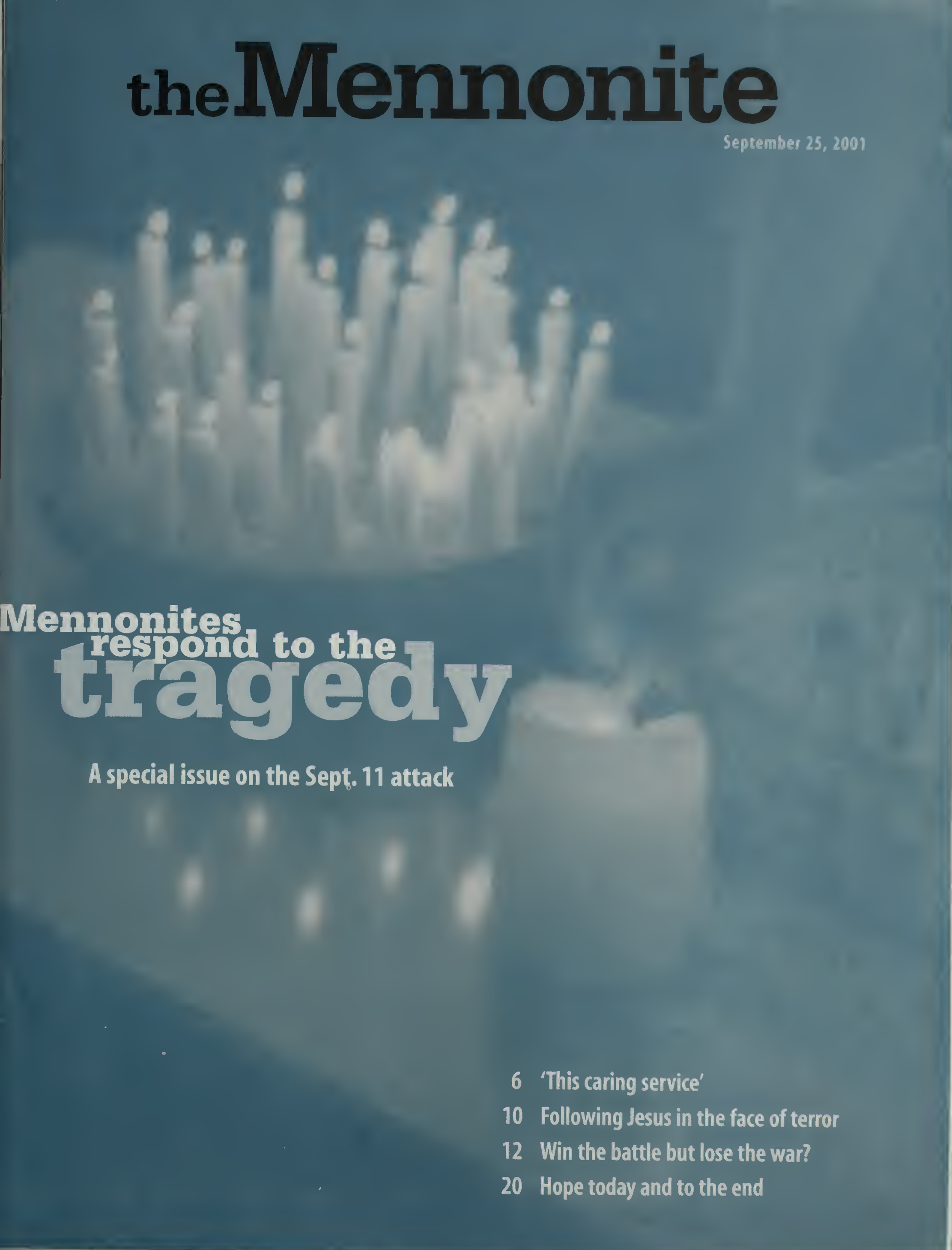
It would be easiest to explain this hate and anger as the diabolic evil of a wealthy madman. But such a characterization does not explain why thousands of Palestinians celebrated in the towns of Nablus and East Jerusalem when they heard about the destruction. Such an explanation does not recognize that anti-American sentiment seethes throughout Islamic cultures in the Middle East.

If past terrorist attacks serve any lesson, our country will now focus on how to respond. National pride as the world's lone superpower will yield overwhelming public support for retaliation and revenge. In the next weeks and months, it will be difficult for Mennonites to talk about loving our enemies.

But the place to begin loving our enemies is to explain to our children why others hate us and our country so much. Doing so does not disrespect the lives of the thousands who died innocently, even heroically. We can grieve their murder and be angry that our country's tranquility has been destroyed. At the same time, we can try to understand what our country and its policies look like from the perspectives of those who attack us. This is the first step toward understanding the hate and anger.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

September 25, 2001



Mennonites respond to the tragedy

A special issue on the Sept. 11 attack

6 'This caring service'
10 Following Jesus in the face of terror
12 Win the battle but lose the war?
20 Hope today and to the end

Seeking to be prophetic and patriotic

Mennonite Church USA responds to Sept. 11, 2001

On the morning of Sept. 11, three airliners were hijacked and turned into missiles. They were flown directly into the World Trade Center in New York City and into the Pentagon in Washington. The number of dead is still being counted.

In response, the United States has begun preparations for war. For the first time in history, NATO invoked a provision that means that the Sept. 11 attack is defined as an attack against all its members. Pakistan, which has had a love-hate relationship with our country, has agreed to assist in the invasion of Afghanistan. The word from our country to the rest of world: If you are not our ally in this battle against terrorist cells, then you define yourself as our enemy, and we will destroy you.

We live in that difficult middle ground between being prophetic and being patriotic. We may wish to resolve the tension quickly, but the next months and years will not allow quick resolution.

As our country prepares for a protracted war, U.S. Mennonites have begun to find their voices. At first stunned by the tragedy, we have slowly gathered our thoughts and begun to call for restraint on the part of our leaders.

For those of us here at *The Mennonite*, a trickle of responses turned into a torrent. Doug Krehbiel's mournful litany (page 5) arrived shortly after the second tower at the World Trade Center collapsed. Within days, we received so many submissions that we decided to scrap nearly everything else already prepared for the Sept. 25 issue. This is, then, a partial collection of the many responses to the tragedy that has struck our world.

With this issue of *The Mennonite*, we wish to give our readers encouragement, support and the words to speak of peace. Included on these pages are the thoughts and prayers of old and young, leaders and followers, men and women, U.S. citizens and sisters and brothers from around the world.

The weeks and months ahead will be difficult, especially in our work places. Our friends will wonder what is wrong with us when we do not call for retaliation and revenge. Acquaintances and colleagues may suggest that we are enemies of our country. The real contribution that this peace church will make is not in letters to the president or the local newspaper. Our greatest witness for peace will be located in the conversations with our neighbors, with co-workers and even with members of our own families who do not understand the convictions we hold.

We carry a unique agony into these conversations. On the one hand, we love our country and want to do what we can to call the United States to her founding ideals of tolerance and liberty for all. We want to participate in the public debate about how our country responds to our world, even when attacked.

But on the other hand, we know that we are first of all citizens of God's kingdom, which knows no national boundaries. The global community of faith has tried for years to tell us how our country exploits and manipulates others to sustain the security and standard of living we enjoy.

So we live in that difficult middle ground between being prophetic and being patriotic. We may wish to resolve the tension quickly, but the next months and years will not allow quick resolution.

An email arrived recently that was not intended for publication. This Mennonite scholar agonized out loud about why he had placed an American flag on his office door. "Can patriotism be a Christian virtue from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective?" he asked and then wrote of an "alternative patriotism."

But Mennonites are not alone in searching for alternatives. For example, a columnist at the *Toledo Blade* sought out Richard Kauffman, pastor of Toledo (Ohio) Mennonite Church. The interview was published with the headline, "Is principle for peace unpatriotic?" At the end of the column, in which Kauffman wondered out loud whether his church would be vandalized because of his comments, columnist Roberta de Boer wrote, "Halfway through my conversation with Mr. Kauffman, I realized I sought him out not only to interview, but to draw strength from. I want with all my heart to tamp down the blood-boiling desire to see destroyed those who destroyed so many."

May this issue of *The Mennonite* similarly embolden us all to let God's healing and hope flow freely through us to our neighbors, to our country and to the world. Mennonite Church USA is now called to stand in that difficult middle ground between the patriotic and the prophetic.—*Everett J. Thomas*

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Cover photo by J. Tyler Klassen, *Elkhart* (Ind.) *Truth*

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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J. Tyler Klassen

Mennonite responses

Reflections on a tragedy

by John D. Roth

Like the images of the space shuttle Challenger exploding in midflight, the sight of the plane crashing into the World Trade Center #2 tower—with the ball of orange fire bursting out of the upper floors—is now etched permanently in the minds of anyone watching TV on Sept. 11. Add to that the images of falling skyscrapers, billowing smoke across the New York City skyline, the Pentagon ablaze, wreckage strewn across the Somerset County, Pa., countryside, the frantic efforts to search for survivors amid the rubble … and the mind goes numb.

It is difficult—maybe dangerous—to interpret the meaning of a tragic event of this proportion so soon after its occurrence. Since most of us have no frame of reference to make sense of such a catastrophe, our first reaction is to seek meaning from sources close at hand. For many Americans that means an appeal to national pride and a determination to exact revenge. A smaller group, perhaps especially among Mennonites, has an impulse to own national blame: after years of sowing to the winds of American military and economic dominance, we are now reaping our own whirlwind.

As one way of moving beyond these initial reactions, here are the thoughts of a citizen, a historian, a Mennonite, a Christian.

1. Let us bear witness to the pain of those who are suffering. The number of people who have died as a result of the four hijacked planes and the aftermath of destruction may never fully be known. Yet behind the magnitude of this number are individuals, each with a distinctive face, each with plans and dreams that came to an abrupt end. During the weeks ahead the pain of each death will send a ripple of grief through family, friends and co-workers. All of us can bear witness to the pain evoked by this senseless loss of life. Even from a distance it is appropriate to weep with those who weep, to mourn with those who mourn.

2. Let us be reminded of the fragility of our orderly lives. One of the consequences of life in a superpower is the orderliness of our daily activities. While for many in our country life is not always orderly or secure, from a perspective of world history the relative peace and affluence most North Americans have come to assume as normal is actually an aberration—an exception to the far more common state of affairs of most people in the world, who are constantly vulnerable to the unpredictability of disease, famine or war. The orderly flow of our life—sustained by the rule of law, a growing economy, habits of self-restraint and even the common courtesies extended at a four-way stop sign—is something we have taken for granted. The events of Sept. 11 remind us that the web of civil stability is fragile. We should return to our lives with renewed gratitude for the social order we have come to assume.

3. Let us become more attentive to the patterns of violence in our world. No act of violence—especially those organized by terrorist groups—takes place in a vacuum. The seeds of hatred that gave rise to these events were sown, no doubt, long ago. They were likely watered by a festering sense of political and economic injustice, and they took root amid the rage of powerlessness. From the perspective of the perpetrators, the violence we witnessed on Sept. 11 was almost certainly an act of retributive justice against a powerful nation that has come to be a symbol of evil. The impulse among many Americans to strike back swiftly is understandable, yet nothing in such an action will address the sources of hatred that have brought us to this point. And we should not be surprised if military retribution results in another round of violence and vengeance-seeking.

4. Let us attempt to view all these events from God's perspective. In Psalm 46 we get a glimpse of how to look on world events through God's eyes. God, not human beings or national governments, is "our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (v. 1). Even as "the nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter" (v. 6a) around us, "the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (v. 7). Moreover, God "makes wars cease to the end of the earth; … breaks the bow, and shatters the spear" (v. 9). God calls us to "a river whose streams make glad the city of God" (v. 4). In the weeks and months ahead, as we follow the rescue efforts, as we share in the pain, grief and outrage of those who have suffered and as we debate the merits of various political responses, keep in mind the concluding words of this psalm: "'Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.' The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (vv. 10-11).

John D. Roth teaches history at Goshen (Ind.) College.

The impulse among many Americans to strike back swiftly is understandable, yet nothing in such an action will address the sources of hatred that have brought us to this point.

to the Sept. 11 tragedy

Excerpts from other responses

Christian Peacemaker Teams invites congregations to forego worship as usual on a Sunday this month and walk some distance (one mile or kilometer) to a public place to (1) reflect on what it means to be a Christian in this age; (2) remember the past, current and future victims of war, terrorism and violence; (3) renew our commitment to walking in Jesus' way of nonviolence locally and globally and to "getting in the way" of comfortable analysis and unjust structures that lead to violence. Resources are available at <cpt@igc.org> or <www.cpt.org>. *—CPT News Service*

We condemn the attacks of terror on Sept. 11 in the United States. We grieve with the families and victims of this tragedy. ... These apparent terrorist attacks are a sobering reminder that we live in a world in which everyone is vulnerable and linked. They must compel us to work even more fervently to find peaceful resolutions to conflict.*—Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.*

As I took my daughters home from school after seeing the aftermath of the destruction at the World Trade Center in New York, my daughter Mica said: "When I grow up I want to give lots of blood to share with other people. And Mommy, if something happens to me and I die, too, I don't want to be buried; I want to share all my bones and everything to help other kids who have been hurt." One block later she said, "Mommy, what exactly does terrorist mean?" I struggled to explain: "I understand why they named them that, but they used the wrong word. The terror only lasts for a little bit. They should have called them sorrowists."*—Katrina Yoder, member of Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship*

1. God is big and remains sovereign over all of human life.

2. We do well to remember that the good life we enjoy and assume as our right is not shared by most of the people in the world.

3. Words such as "terrorist" and "barbarian" are demeaning terms that make us prejudge whole groups of people. Not all Muslims or Arabs are terrorists. Let our language be seasoned with love and grace.

4. Mennonites have an opportunity to model restorative rather than retributive justice, to heal and restore rather than seek retaliation.

5. We should not be surprised by what happened. The world is a dangerous place.

6. This is a wonderful time for Christians to link hands in encouragement and comfort with one another, in ministry to the needs of the world, in worship and prayer to God.

7. Above all, we need to reaffirm that Jesus is our peace, both for our hearts and in our relationships (Ephesians 2).*—from a chapel address at Christopher Dock High School, Lansdale, Pa., by James M. Lapp, Franconia Conference minister*

On our way to a family reunion in Colorado, we were stranded in the Houston airport on Sept. 11. What stands out is that there was not flaring of tempers among the thousands of stranded travelers.*—Robert O. Zehr, member of Des Allemands (La.) Mennonite Church*

Our duty and opportunity is to call for responses of restraint. Anything but escalation of violence. These acts were done by people who use violence as their tool. Are we the same as those people—do we also use violence as our tool? Are we even worse than them, prepared to use more violence and inflict more death than they did?*—John Stoner, director of Every Church a Peace Church, Akron, Pa.*

Peace must be the way to peace. War and violence only beget more of the same. A fist provokes another fist. Someone must have the fortitude to offer the open hand of Christ. Then maybe the sword can be shattered and all God's people can gather by quiet waters. Then maybe the lamb and wolf can lie down together.*—Ruben Chupp, pastor, North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.*

We bow before God as a people of faith, asking forgiveness for our silent complicity with sin in our broken world. We have too often pursued our own narrow interests, brushing aside the needs and anguish of others throughout the earth. We refrain from passing judgment on anyone for the deeds leading to this tragic loss of life and destruction, even as we grieve with the victims, their families and our nation. We seek the peace and salvation of all peoples. May our nation's leaders find grace, wisdom and restraint.*—from a letter by Jim Schrag, executive director, Mennonite Church USA*

The clouds of smoke, the
pillars of fire,
the descending rubble,
like a mini-Hiroshima
are etched upon my brain
with unthinkable carnage
yet to come.
Peace to you stricken with
shock and grief.
Peace to you laughing over
what you feel is victory.
Peace to you planning
revenge.
May we strengthen our
resolve to spread Jesus'
gospel of peace and love
of enemies.
May we strengthen our
resolve to engage the
powers of hate and
greed—no matter what
the cost.
May we strengthen our
resolve to work for justice around the world.
—from a litany by Doug Krehbiel, director of peace and justice resources, Commission on Home Ministries

Here are some things we can do and be:

Do (1) pray for neighbors and enemies, (2) give blood, (3) commit random acts of kindness and encourage others to do the same.

Be (1) overtly and intentionally peaceful in your thoughts, words and deeds, (2) a calm presence in the face of others' anxieties, (3) hopeful for restorative—not just retributive—justice. *—Tammerie Spires, associate pastor, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Texas*

Responses to the Sept. 11 tragedy

'This caring service'

New York City Mennonites cope with attack's effects while looking to help others.

by Rich Preheim

When two hijacked airplanes slammed into the two 110-story World Trade Center towers on Sept. 11, the resulting catastrophe created immense physical destruction that killed thousands. But there also was damage that won't be so visible and could be longer lasting.

With the help of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), New York City's Mennonite congregations are preparing to provide help to residents who are suffering emotionally due to the loss of family, friends, jobs and security.

"The effect that [the terrorist attack] is going to have on the people needs to be addressed," says Monroe Yoder, moderator of the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches, an organization of 16 congregations affiliated with Atlantic Coast and Lancaster area conferences.

MDS volunteer Joe Steiner, social work professor emeritus at Syracuse (N.Y.) University, was in New York City Sept. 14-20 to begin training congregational members to help people suffering emotionally as a result of the terrorist attacks. Those victims may include neighbors and even emergency workers as well as other Mennonites. MDS officials are preparing for a mental-health response in New York City.

> **There were people with bandages or missing their shirts, people walking around in a daze or sitting along the street, just stunned.**—*Sandra Perez*

Steiner's visit was an "incredible gift" in helping the congregational members deal with the tragedy, says Arlene Pipken, pastor of Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship. Once the New York City Mennonites have been helped, they hope to help others.

"We're doing this with the idea of how we can go out into the world with this caring service," Pipken says.

Hers is the Mennonite congregation closest to the attack site, now being called "ground zero." Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship holds services in a Quaker meetinghouse one block from the 14th Street police line sealing off the disaster site.

While no Mennonites have been reported killed or missing in the attack, Yoder says, "Relatives and certainly friends of our church members have lost loved ones."

One member of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship was at work in a building adjacent to the World Trade Center towers. He escaped, walking over corpses and debris.

Sandra Perez, a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Brooklyn, was voting at her local precinct when a worker told her that a plane had hit the World Trade Center. With the train system subsequently closed, Perez took a bus into Manhattan to find her grandson, whose school is near the towers. Fortunately, he was not injured.

"He said he saw people jumping out of the [World Trade Center] building," Perez says. "He just ran."

Meanwhile, downtown Brooklyn was filling with refugees from Manhattan. "There were people with bandages or missing their shirts, people walking around in a daze or sitting along the street, just stunned," Perez says.

She sought comfort at United Revival Mennonite Church in Brooklyn, which was open throughout the day for prayer and counseling. Yoder says most congregations had such "debriefing" meetings. "That has been repeated over and over again," he says.

Congregations and individuals are reaching out in other ways, as well. Immanuel Community Church in Queens has been assisting a local organization in feeding 1,000 rescue workers a day at ground zero. A member of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship baked cookies for the fire station next door to her home. Other congregations have participated in dialogue sessions with Arabs, Muslims and Jews.

"These are the type of things we need to do some work at, that lead to dialogue, that lead to understanding, that lead to security," Yoder says.

John Rempel, Mennonite Central Committee's liaison to the United Nations, tried to donate blood but was turned away because the collection site ran out of storage due to the heavy turnout.

"You feel helpless," Rempel says. "It's a major tragedy, and the effects are within eyesight."

Rich Preheim is associate editor for news for The Mennonite. *MCC News Service contributed to this story.*

MDS response to focus on mental-health work

Volunteers, material assistance not needed in New York City and Washington

Mennonite Disaster Service is known for cleaning after natural disasters. But MDS wants to help New Yorkers pick up the pieces emotionally.

The agency, which has already sent a retired social work professor to the city, is anticipating working with other organizations to concentrate on mental-health efforts to assist people traumatized by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.

Joe Steiner from Syracuse, N.Y., social work professor emeritus at Syracuse University, has been named project coordinator. He was in New York City shortly after the attacks to provide counseling for local Mennonites and begin training them to provide similar assistance to others. Steiner also met with other agencies to explore more options.

MDS is not planning on sending other workers to New York City or to Washington. Citing an overwhelming response, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has asked that no more volunteers or donated goods be sent.

Further MDS action will be based upon the requests of FEMA, the American Red Cross and the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD).

MDS board member Carlos Santiago attended a NVOAD meeting in New York City on Sept. 14, where faith-based organizations expressed a desire to work together.

Santiago has spent the past year working with New York City congregations and emergency management leaders to make preparations for a natural disaster. "All that networking is already paying off in this response," says MDS spokesman Ted Houser.

To support these efforts, MDS is accepting funds for its Restoring Hope Fund, and the response has already been generous, Houser says. "Checks are coming in larger than usual," he says.

MDS had earlier allocated funds to support a shipment of relief supplies from Mennonite Central Committee. Six bales of socks plus one bale each of T-shirts, blankets and washcloths went to New York City rescue workers.

MCC photo by Mark Beach

Bale of help: Matt Miller (left) of Timothy House Ministries and Kevin King, Mennonite Central Committee material resources manager, load a bale of socks at Timothy House's office in Lititz, Pa. MCC donated nine bales of socks, T-shirts, blankets and washcloths for rescue workers in New York City following the attacks on the World Trade Center. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has since requested that no more material assistance and no more volunteers be sent to New York City or Washington.

The initiative was organized by Robert J. Moran of Timothy House Ministries, based in Lititz, Pa. Moran, now a minister, once did drywall work on the 52nd floor of the World Trade Center's Tower One.

MDS and MCC have not been the only Mennonite agencies responding to the needs caused by the terrorist attacks. Mennonite Mutual Aid staff and board members have been accumulating contributions to be sent to the Mennonite congregations in New York City.

MCC and MDS news services contributed to this story.

To contribute to Mennonite Disaster Service's response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, contact:
MDS Restoring Hope Fund
1018 Main St.
Akron, PA 17501
phone 717-859-2210

Hillsboro (Kan.) *Free Press*

Pay dirt: A Bethel College player lunges for a Tabor College runner during the Sept. 14 "Mennonite Bowl" between the two Kansas schools. Bethel is a General Conference Mennonite Church college in North Newton, while Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Tabor is in Hillsboro. The game raised more than $2,000 for Mennonite Mutual Aid to assist Mennonite congregations in New York City following the Sept. 11 terrorist attack.

Lifting prayers, throwing passes

U.S. Mennonites turn out to show concern, support following terrorist attack.

by Melanie Zuercher

National Football League and major college football stadiums were empty the weekend after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack. But the football team from Bethel College, a General Conference Mennonite Church school in North Newton, Kan., traveled about half an hour up the road to Hillsboro, Kan., to take on conference foe and Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Tabor College in the annual "Mennonite Bowl."

The score was Tabor 42, Bethel 28 and more than $2,000 raised for Mennonite responses to the assault on the World Trade Center towers. The money will go to New York City Mennonite congregations via Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA).

Following the attacks, MMA began soliciting money from its employees and board members to go to the New York congregations, some of which had received MMA assistance in the past. David Faber, an MMA board member and Tabor professor, mentioned the idea to one of his classes. And the idea grew from there.

Tabor students, who don't have to pay to get into home football games, were asked to pay a $2 admission fee as a contribution. The Tabor football team decided they would also contribute $2 each, in effect paying to play. Bethel said its players would also contribute.

"They're a really big rival of ours," Tabor senior Cindy Harden told the Associated Press, "and it's an amazing thing that we've been able to unite like this."

People nationwide also united in prayer. More than 100 people turned out for a Sept. 11 evening service at Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa.

"I didn't think we could let people know fast enough, even using email and a phone tree, but I left it up to [a congregational member], and she got the word out," co-pastor Katherine Pitts says.

"People are shaken," she says. "There are so many connection stories. ... Everyone had a story of a friend, a relative or a friend's relative."

People are shaken. There are so many connection stories.

—Katherine Pitts

One congregational member works with the brother of a pilot of one of the hijacked airliners. Another member's company had 40 floors of office space in one of the World Trade Center towers, and he knew people who worked there. One couple each had a sibling who worked in the World Trade Center or nearby but neither was at work that morning.

At the General Conference Mennonite Church offices in Newton, Kan., staff were praying with Mennonite Voluntary Service personnel assistant Katie Marshall, whose nephew was on the 85th floor of one of the World Trade Center towers when a plane smashed into the building two floors above him.

By the end of the afternoon, Marshall had learned he was safe, though with a harrowing tale to tell of making his way down 85 flights of stairs in a burning building that collapsed as he and others were running away from it.

Denominational office staff as well as students, faculty and staff of Mennonite educational institutions gathered for hastily planned communal prayer services when they heard about the attacks. In Elkhart, Ind., staff from denominational offices and Oaklawn, a Mennonite mental health facility, joined the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary community for a late morning prayer service.

Melanie Zuercher is editor of GCMC News Service. Rich Preheim contributed to this story.

World: grief, pain, confusion

Attack on United States generates flurry of support from more than 20 countries.

by Rich Preheim

Sisters and brothers around the globe have joined U.S. Mennonites in shock and grief following the Sept. 11 attacks on New York City and Washington, with messages of care and concern coming from more than 20 countries, many of them having firsthand experience with terrorism.

"In a country where the fear, anguish and pain of war are seemingly permanent, we understand your hurting," wrote the Colombian Mennonite Church's Justice and Peace Committee and Justapaz, the Colombian Mennonite peace and justice organization. "We share your grief, confusion and incomprehension. …

"We condemn this act of violence just as we denounce all behavior stealing life, regardless of place or the nationality of the victims or the perpetrators."

The GKMI, one of three Mennonite synods in Indonesia, where Islam is the predominant religion, reaffirmed its commitment to love, truth, justice and peace. "Therefore we are weeping over this act of destruction on the values of humanity," wrote GKMI leaders. "We pray for reconciliation and peace on earth."

In a letter addressed to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the Dutch Mennonite church, Algemene Doopsgezinde Societet, "wishes to pay respect to those who suffered from this brutal deed of violence.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with you all and with the American people as a whole. We sincerely hope and pray to God that this evil deed will not bring an escalation in violence throughout the world."

Henry Góngora, director of Ediciones Clara, an Anabaptist publishing house in Colombia, wrote, "When words are confusing and there are no answers to our questions, that's when the prayers that renew hope become significant."

Not all condolences came from denominational leaders. "As sisters and brothers in faith, we know that when one part of the body of believers is hurt, the whole body feels pain," wrote Levy and Leontine, local MCC workers in Burkina Faso. "This tragedy reminds us to draw closer to the Creator, the only one in control of all of human life."

Dinh Thi Vinh, a local MCC worker in Vietnam, wrote, "Not only America but also the world community is frightened by such an attack."

As the search for those behind the attack focuses on Arabs, a number of Palestinian organizations and individuals have expressed their sorrow at the Sept. 11 tragedy. "Our hearts are torn apart by this," said Zoughbi Zoughbi of the Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center, an MCC partner organization in Bethlehem.

Hope Secondary School staff and students in the West Bank village of Beit Jala wrote of their shock "at the ugly and cowardly attack. … Our thoughts and prayers are with [the American] people in this tragic ordeal. We sympathize with the families of the innocent victims. We pray to our Lord Jesus Christ to give comfort to each one of you to overcome this tragic ordeal."

In Iran, MCC workers Wally and Evelyn Shellenberger reported feeling supported by the local Muslim community. The Shellenbergers said their landlord brought a gift of food, and several people have called to see how they were doing.

Responses have also come from Afghanistan, Bolivia, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Mexico, Russia, Tanzania, Ukraine and Zimbabwe.

MCC News Service contributed to this story.

Attack leaves some immigrants fearful

Many Americans are concerned about their safety following the Sept. 11 terrorist attack. That in turn has immigrants and people who may appear Arab worried about a backlash against them.

Nowhere is that more evident than in New York City, where the local Mennonite population includes Hispanics and Ethiopians. Monroe Yoder, moderator of the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches, says they are concerned about an anti-immigrant environment. "There's a fear there that factors into congregational life," he says.

Neville McDonald, a native of India who works in Mennonite Central Committee's human resources department in Akron, Pa., says he has received angry looks and a vulgar gesture since the attack.

"I've seen this before in the disputes among religious groups in my country," he says. "People are so hurt and angry. You can see the suspicion in their eyes."

In the Kitchener-Waterloo area of Ontario, a member of the MCC anti-racism team was harassed and taunted by fellow riders on a public bus. A refugee from Central America, the woman was presumed to be Arab because of her appearance, says MCC Ontario director Arli Klassen.

Ten Thousand Villages director Paul Myers, director of MCC's fair-trade Ten Thousand Villages program, made a special effort to express friendship on behalf of MCC to a Muslim from India who operates a store in Akron. "[He] was deeply grateful for our concern," Myers says. "He and his wife had been discussing the tragedies and wondering if there were going to be repercussions."
—Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service with Rich Preheim

Responses to the Sept. 11 tragedy

Following Jesus

A peace church response to terrorism

by J. Denny Weaver

The events of Sept. 11 shocked the world. Since then we have witnessed an escalating, patriotic outcry about the need to "do something." President Bush has assured the world that he will do something. These events challenge the faithfulness of the peace church in coming weeks.

Revelation holds a precedent and an answer. Each of the seals in Revelation 6 uses symbols to refer to events during the reigns of first-century Roman emperors—e.g., Tiberius, under whose rule Jesus was killed, or Domitian, the emperor at the time the book was written. The sixth seal corresponds to Emperor Vespasian. During his reign in A.D. 70, a Roman army destroyed the sacred city of Jerusalem. The images of earthquake, celestial collapse and panic in the streets in Revelation 6:12-17 all depict the destruction and accompanying feelings of loss and despair. Today Americans can empathize with what the residents of Jerusalem felt in A.D. 70.

Revelation 7:10-12 features a song of celebration for the victory of the reign of God. John shows that while the forces of evil appear to have a momentary victory, in the resurrection of Jesus even the worst imaginable evil, namely the destruction of Jerusalem, is overcome. These words from Revelation apply today. In the face of overwhelming evil, our faith and hope rest in the resurrection of Jesus rather than in any earthly, political entity.

But we need to respond now, in this world. Here also our answer rests with Jesus Christ. To be Christian is to be Christlike, to live within the story of Jesus. The response of the peace church to the events of Sept. 11 should reflect Jesus rather than mirroring the violence of that day.

As I write, many voices are saying that the nation needs to do something. But let's consider what this kind of "doing something" means.

Do nothing or use violence: First, recognize the assumptions behind the push to do something. It means to do something violent. One assumption is that only two options exist: do nothing or use violence. A second assumption is that if violence is used, it will succeed.

The people who committed these horrific deeds thought violence would work. Every war and violent conflict proceeds on the assumption that violence works. But since each side believes violence works, violence is actually guaranteed to fail half the time. Since the "winning side" also experiences losses and outcomes are less than clear-cut, it actually fails more than half the time. President Bush is already assuring us that the coming war will be protracted and difficult. Violence is a much less effective tool than the push to do something assumes. Christians oriented by the life of Jesus should remember that as they encounter the patriotic rush to do something.

When each side believes that only violence will resolve a problem, each act of retaliation to teach the other a lesson only provokes another cycle of violence. This cycle follows intrinsically from the assumption made by each side that violence is the only way to deal with the other.

The many responses the peace church could make are revealed by further analysis of types of violence. On Sept. 11 we saw direct violence. The prevailing belief is that if direct violence is absent, then no violence is present. But there are other forms of violence that break the peace.

Systemic violence: When one group exercises unfair or unjust power or control over another, the status quo is unfair or unjust, even without overt violence. This condition is called systemic or structural violence. For example, if one race prevents another from equal participation in society, that is the systemic violence of racism, even if white people are not lynching black people. When one cluster of institutions and nations accumulates wealth and controls the global economy in ways that keep poor countries poor, that is the systemic violence of poverty. When one nation exercises military occupation of another, that occupation is violence, even if the occupiers are not actively shooting people in the streets.

People subject to systemic violence have demanded change. When those who control the systems then make reforms, systemic violence decreases. However, those who benefit from the system of control may refuse to make changes. Instead, they create harsher means of control in order to maintain the status quo. The new measures may suppress the resistance for a time, but the frustration of the disadvantaged will continue to build until another, more violent eruption occurs. And the defenders of the status quo then respond with even more violent measures to suppress the uprising. But all the while the problems—racism, poverty, military occupation—that provoked the uprising remain. In this never-ending cycle of violence and repression, each side claims the rightness of its use of violence against the other.

> In the face of overwhelming evil, our faith and hope rest in the resurrection of Jesus rather than in any earthly, political entity.

in the face of terror

In responding to the events of Sept. 11, we need to understand this cycle of repression and violence. Of course, the violence of terrorism is wrong, even when the damage is much less than what we saw on our TV screens. But we can also understand why violence in retaliation will not solve the problem but will, in fact, only make it worse. Peace church Christians must not get caught up in patriotic war rhetoric, and they should not be supporting the coming American military actions.

Separation from the world: Refusing to sanction both the violence of terrorism and retaliation is not a call for the peace church to withdraw and proclaim separation from the world. Our options are not limited to using violence or doing nothing. We need to look for ways to address the systemic problems that nourish the cycle of violence. We need to ask what causes such hatred against the United States.

Is it relevant, for example, that the United States, with some 4 percent of the world's population, consumes about 40 percent of the world's resources? Does sucking that much of the world's resources into this country have anything to do with poverty in other countries, and does it create resentment? I am afraid so. Or does the fact that this wealthy nation continues to support the ongoing occupation and confiscation of Palestinian territory contribute to the hostility that the United States engenders in the world? I am sure that it does.

Organizations such as Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) address these problems through witness and accompaniment activities that call attention to violence and injustice. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) addresses systemic injustice through programs of material and developmental aid and through education of North Americans about the realities of systemic violence.

Active peacemaking: But the efforts of MCC and CPT are small in view of the church's potential and the problems in the world. As a peace church we have barely begun to research techniques for active nonviolent peacemaking in national and international conflicts. And as a denomination, we have committed few resources to active peacemaking in international contexts. CPT receives only token funding from the sponsoring Mennonite, Brethren and Quaker denominations. During World War II, MCC spent $3 million on Civilian Public Service in seven years. In today's dollars that would be in the neighborhood of $23 million. Does the church today have enough faith in the nonviolent story of Jesus to commit that amount of money in the next seven years to research and development of nonviolent peacemaking strategies and to training our young people in implementing them?

Responding to the events of Sept. 11 is not a choice between doing nothing and violent retaliation. Nonviolent responses that address the causes of the cycle of violence will not appeal to patriotism, and they will not be as flashy as the violent response that George W. Bush and the Pentagon envision. But in the long view, such efforts will contribute more to peace than will the looming violent response.

Nonviolent strategies work. The writings of Gene Sharp and other nonviolent theorists contain examples at all levels where nonviolence has worked. But because it can be effective is not the foundational reason for advocating nonviolence.

At the same time, I harbor no illusion that the U.S. government or large numbers of people will adopt nonviolent strategies. But the fact that most folks will reject nonviolence is no reason for the peace church to abandon it.

Jesus' mission: The ultimate reason for the peace church to develop nonviolent peacemaking is that it is Christian, it is intrinsic to the story of Jesus Christ. We confess Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. We are his disciples. Since Jesus' mission was to make present the peaceable reign of God in his person in our history, our calling as his disciples is to do likewise.

The resurrection of Jesus established the reign of God as victorious over evil. We participate in and witness to that victory by living within the story of Jesus, the victorious Lamb. "But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony" (Revelation 12:11). It is our lived testimony that makes visible today that the peaceable reign of God has triumphed over evil in the resurrection of Jesus. Nonviolent peacemaking is our calling as Christians.

May God grant us the wisdom and the courage to live in the resurrection of Jesus in the face of the violence that happened on Sept. 11 and that is sure to happen in the coming weeks.

This article is based on a sermon presented at Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church on Sept. 16. J. Denny Weaver teaches theology and ethics at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Since Jesus' mission was to make present the peaceable reign of God in his person in our history, our calling as his disciples is to do likewise.

Responses to the Sept. 11 tragedy

Win the battle but lose the war?

The only long-term solution to terrorism is a world free of desperation and the resentment it breeds.

by Ron Kraybill

We are at war. But it is a different kind than some think. This is a battle for the heart and soul of humanity. If we lose, our grandchildren will inherit a world more miserable than our own.

How the United States responds to the atrocities it has experienced will have a big impact on that future world.

There was a time when individual retaliation for offenses was the norm in all societies: tit for tat, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. Gradually, societies throughout the world have recognized this as barbarity. Most nations of the world now have legal frameworks and a state system for dealing with crime. The whole society carries the responsibility to hold members accountable, and mechanisms of the state are employed to accomplish this. For this system to work, individuals must be forbidden the right to retaliate.

The world waits expectantly for our response. Now is a time to think long-term, to be guided by values that support the kind of world we want our children to live in.

A century ago, nations lived independently. Today, we are linked hourly by communication, transport and commerce. We cannot escape each other. The only hope for peace and security is to make the world a global society. All must together shoulder the responsibility to respond to atrocities when they happen.

So long as individual nations are free to retaliate alone for offenses, the cycle of violence and retaliation will be endless.

Massive retaliation by U.S. armed forces is precisely the response most sought by terrorists. After all, terrorist organizations are relatively small and weak, and a primary goal is publicity and recruitment of new supporters. Their best hope is to provoke a reaction that earns new enemies for us and new sympathizers for the terrorists. Whoever did this knows that the families and friends of whoever dies in the U.S. response will provide the next generation of supporters for them and their cause.

Retaliation may make us feel better. But do we really think terrorists will thoughtfully respond, "Hmm, that was painful. Now we have learned our lesson and will never do that again"? Too much is at stake to be guided by indulging what feels good.

This moment of unprecedented horror presents us, ironically, with unprecedented opportunity. The world waits expectantly for our response. Now is a time to think long-term, to be guided by values that support the kind of world we want our children to live in.

Do we want the rule of law among nations? Do we want a world where nations share collective responsibility for confronting outrageous behavior?

Let us demonstrate moral leadership by refusing to be drawn into the ancient cycle of revenge and retaliation and instead inviting the world community to shoulder the responsibility to respond to these terrible acts.

Let us recognize further that the only long-term solution to terrorism is a world free of desperation and the resentment it breeds. Rather than respond at the same level of debased values with which we have been assailed, let us offer our best moral and economic resources to address the desperation and resentment that fuel terrorism.

We can win this war, but only if we recognize that the enemy is not the terrorists; it is the divisions human beings create among each other.

Ron Kraybill is an associate professor of conflict studies in the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Just because you are attacked, do not assume you are at war

Five reasons not to describe the current crisis as a war

by Jayne Dogherty, Ron Kraybill and Howard Zehr

As we watch with horror and grief the rescue and recovery efforts in New York and Washington, we mourn with the victims. We also watch with concern as the space for talking and thinking about this crisis narrows in a manner that will prevent decision-makers from considering the full range of possible responses.

We have seen this narrowing of space in prior crisis situations. Within days of the 1993 standoff in Waco, Texas, the Branch Davidians had been labeled a cult and the public rhetoric helped drive their confrontation with federal agents to its tragic end. Language has power to shape our world, and we urge everyone concerned about responding to the horror of Sept. 11 to think carefully before using the language of war to describe the current crisis.

Here are five reasons not to describe the current crisis as a war:

1. If we describe this as a war, we grant the perpetrators of these unspeakable acts a dignity they do not deserve.

These are criminal acts. We have no evidence that those who perpetrated them are legitimate rulers of a state or nation. They may not even be legitimate representatives of a disenfranchised identity group seeking representation within a state or nation.

2. If we describe this as a war, we assume that we are dealing with an identifiable enemy, located in a clear space and subject to military attack.

The perpetrators of this horror are not clearly identifiable, cannot be located easily and probably cannot be attacked successfully using military means.

Any military-style response that may target some of these people effectively is likely to violate the rules of war, making the world a much more dangerous place for everyone.

3. If we describe this as a war, we imply that war can bring our enemies to their knees and keep them from ever harming us again.

We have yet to fight successfully a "war to end all wars," and this will be no exception.

Military attacks on any nation that harbors the criminals responsible for these atrocities will create thousands of refugees; refugee camps have been the breeding ground for suicide bombers. Thus, we will only perpetuate the cycle of fear and terror for our children and grandchildren.

4. If we describe this as a war, we avoid asking why people would hate us enough to kill themselves in order to seek vengeance upon us.

We fail to examine and address the conditions and policies that have given rise to the cycles of unrest, violence and terror that have been escalating around the world and that on Sept. 11 entered the previously safe space of the most powerful nation on earth.

5. If we describe this as a war, we betray our highest values of due process, justice and fairness.

Criminals are granted rights that enemies in war are denied.

If we fail to invoke the national and international laws that apply to criminal acts, we undercut the rule of law and weaken the sources of our own long-term protection.

Jayne Dogherty, Ron Kraybill and Howard Zehr teach in the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

An open letter to Alex Chadwick of National Public Radio

Dear Mr. Chadwick,

Yesterday morning (Sept. 12) I heard you lament that "This country has changed … we are no longer safe." In this moment of great pain and horrific loss, it is hard to question your words. Fear looms large around us.

Yet the truth you speak is at best partial. Your "we" assumes too much.

People of color have never been safe in this country. Before the World Trade Center towers collapsed and the Pentagon burned, Arab-Americans were already not safe from hate mail and suspicion. Before Sept. 11, African-Americans were already not safe from racial profiling or harrassment by police. Before Tuesday, Native Americans were already not safe from staggering unemployment in their own land. Before the day before yesterday, Mexican-Americans were already not safe from illegal deportation.

Mr. Chadwick, don't get me wrong, I agree that things have changed. I don't question that. My wonderment is for all of us white people who were included in your unconscious "we." How will we respond to all the changes that take place?

Will we allow for tight security to make "suspicious" anyone with dark skin or "foreign" features? Will we sit still while we are served by systems of protection designed to meet our needs? Will we remain quiet while enemy-making around us intensifies the lack of safety for people of color?

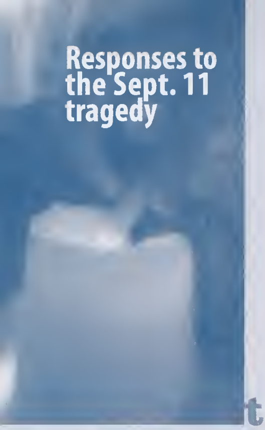
I don't know how I will answer the questions that I raise to you. In this moment of tragedy, I can hardly bring myself to think about what lies ahead.

One more thing, Mr. Chadwick, that I ought to tell you. It also has to do with safety. For each of the more than 200 flights I have taken in the past eight years, I have carried a Swiss Army knife in my pocket. Not once was I questioned. When I mentioned this one day, an African-American woman listening to me laughed. The day before, she had been prevented from carrying a Swiss Army knife half the size of mine onto a plane.

My prayer for both of us on this day of continued grief and mourning is that we will not let our government use our fear like a pocketknife to stab people of color in the name of restoring our safety.

Sincerely,

Tobin Miller Shearer, Lancaster, Pa.



Responses to the Sept. 11 tragedy

Searching through the rubble: an oral history

by Amy Spencer

I, Resister, was murdered by police
and a revolution came as I slept.
—Steven Biko, South Africa, 1977

I, Ruler, refused my advisers' counsel
and waited thirteen lonely days.
—John F. Kennedy, United States, 1962

I, Weary, held a starving child. She cried for her mother
and died.
—A relief worker, Iraq, 1997

I, Disobedient, did not eat and did not eat
again, and peace comes and goes.
—Mahatma Gandhi, India, 1948

I, Alone, demanded justice for my people
and life, not death, will have the last word.
—Archbishop Oscar Romero, El Salvador, 1980

I, Preacher, searched the wickedness of us all
and so discovered an eternal truth worth dying for.
—Martin Luther King Jr., United States, 1968

I, Writer, let fly with my pen, making mockeries of war,
and I ask you, Was it to any avail?
—Mark Twain, United States, 1910

I, Woman, sat down—
and I stayed sittin'.
—Rosa Parks, United States, 1955

I, Persecuted, rescued my enemy from icy water
and took the flames.
—Dirk Willems, the Netherlands, 1569

I, Citizen, watched the mighty towers fall, wept, ranted, prayed
and did what God asked of me.
—A Mennonite, 2001

Amy Spencer lives in Kalona, Iowa.

Finding the

Pastors muster Sunday messages for struggling congregations.

by Rich Preheim

Terrorism came within 30 miles of Carpenter Park Mennonite Church in Davidsville, Pa. When the congregation gathered for worship on Sept. 16, five days after hijacked United Airlines flight 93 crashed in Somerset County, pastor Tom Croyle spoke of the importance of salvation and of putting security in God.

"We always feel we are safe and secure," Croyle recounted two days after his sermon. "But we're not exempt from sin. ... We're not exempt from things because we're in the backwoods of the Allegheny Mountains."

If 30 miles away was too close, imagine what the members of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship must feel like. Located just blocks from the World Trade Center, the congregation had to deal with the tragedy in an even more personal way. On the first Sunday after the attack, three eyewitnesses shared their stories.

"That's all part of how you start healing, by telling stories," says pastor Arlene Pipken.

On Sunday, Sept. 16, Mennonites from coast to coast and border to border met in corporate worship to seek comfort and understanding of the horrific Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. What they heard from their pastors and in the Scripture passages that were read hit on a variety of themes: living faithfully, loving enemies, trusting God, accepting God's gift of salvation.

"It was a sermon where I dipped my toe into a number of items," says Weldon Martens, pastor of Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson, Neb.

One of those items was the feeling of shock and anger. "I just acknowledged that on behalf of the congregation," he says.

Another point was the relationship between being a citizen of the United States and a follower of Jesus Christ. "I think that's going to be a long journey yet," Martens says.

Citizenship was also a point of David Roth's sermon at Des Allemands (La.) Mennonite Church. He says he preached "lifting our leaders and country in prayer. And God is in control of all things."

Associate pastor Doug Luginbill says he told First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Ohio, that earthly authority and God's authority are often at odds and that true power does not come from violence. While it may appear that God cannot control events such as the terrorist attacks, he says, control is not the issue.

words

Because God is for us does not mean that the Christian is exempt from tragedy of any sort.—*Dean Linsenmeyer*

"What's clear is that God hates sin and God loves humanity," Luginbill says.

Elaine Bryant, pastor of Englewood Mennonite Church in Chicago, urged her congregation to get right with God. "We should all have a reminder that life can be gone and changed in a matter of minutes," she says, underscoring that "the pure in heart will see God."

Such faithfulness, Bryant says, includes dealing fairly with all people and supporting efforts to alleviate suffering and pain. She says that's why Englewood will be making a contribution to Mennonite Disaster Service's post-attack efforts in New York City.

Bryant also pointed out that the strikes on the halls of financial and political power in New York City and Washington are akin to the treatment of many in her African-American congregation and other people of color.

"Anglo-European Christians are experiencing for the first time in a generation a sense of insecurity that African-Americans and other so-called minorities have experienced all the time in this nation."

Security was the message Dean Linsenmeyer gave in his first sermon as pastor of Glennon Heights Mennonite Church in Lakewood, Colo. "Because God is for us does not mean that the Christian is exempt from tragedy of any sort," he says.

A variety of Scripture passages were used in the first Sunday after the terrorist attacks. For his sermon, Luginbill used Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28, with its images of scorching winds, quaking mountains, ruined towns and foolish people. "It pretty much preached itself in some ways," he says.

Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church pastor Rod Stafford also used Jeremiah but focused on the chapter 18 account of the potter at work. "We have to be shaped by Christ," Stafford says.

He says he did something on Sept. 16 that he rarely does: give the children's story, a responsibility usually taken by someone else. But this time Stafford spoke to them about revenge and not learning to hate other people.

Calico Rock (Ark.) Mennonite Fellowship was on a scheduled weekend retreat following the attacks. Pastor Bob Simonsick says he encouraged "finding peaceful justice."

"This is an opportunity, through the hope of Christ," he says, "to help people overcome this terrible event."

Citing Scripture

The pastors interviewed for this article drew on a wide range of biblical passages for their sermons on the first Sunday after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks:

Psalm 11:1-3
Psalm 30
Psalm 137
Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
Jeremiah 17:9
Matthew 5:4
Matthew 17:1
Luke 12:15-23
Luke 15:1-10
Romans 8:31-39
Romans 13:1-7
Hebrews 11:6

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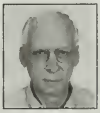
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Events

Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, 30th anniversary celebration, Sept. 30. The celebration is in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the Dallas Peace Center. For information, contact the church at 214-902-8141 or <pmc@airmail.net>.

Workers

Freed, Glenn, in August concluded a pastorate at Hersteins Mennonite Church, Schwenksville, Pa.

Heacock, Randy, in July began as pastor at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Kanagy, Robert, Belleville, Pa., has been named program director at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa.

Lawton, Mary Lou and Wayne, were installed Sept. 16 as pastors of Cedar Hill Community Church, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Leaman, Jeff, was commissioned July 15 as youth minister at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Miller, John, in August concluded a pastorate at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.

Ralph, Jim, in June concluded a pastorate at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pa.

Troyer, Jerry, Loveland, Colo., has been named executive director at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa.

Births

Anderson, Hannah Joy, Aug. 26, to Shane and Teresa (Heisner) Anderson, Washington, Iowa.

Baer, Connor Allen, Aug. 21, to Dalena (Hurst) and Rodrick Baer, Ephrata, Pa.

Goertzen, Erin, Aug. 21, to David and Rebecca (Voss) Goertzen, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Halteman, Jacqueline Grace, July 21, to Barry and Donna (Leatherman) Halteman, Lansdale, Pa.

Higdon, Madison Nowell, Aug. 16, to Emily (Miller) and Frank Higdon, Red Wing, Minn.

Hildebrant, Rosemarie Elizabeth, July 15, to Christine (Wideman) and Roland Hildebrant, Denver.

Maier, Sydney Grace, Sept. 7, to Kimi (Litwiller) and Mike Maier, Bloomington, Ill.

Miller, Andrew Gerald, Aug. 23, to Gerald and Jennifer Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Madison Lyn, Sept. 2, to Audrey (Geissinger) and Mark Miller, Nappanee, Ind.

Moyer, Aaron Todd, July 29, to Amy (Miller) and Todd Moyer, Lititz, Pa.

Orpin, Carson Seth, Sept. 5, to Dana and Denise Orpin, Canton, Kan.

Roth, Benjamin James, Aug. 12, to Derek and Kris (Burnett) Roth, Halstead, Kan.

Von Gunten, Jack Thomas, Aug. 21, to Doug and Jolene (Hostetler) Von Gunten, Goshen, Ind.

Wanner, Lena Katherine, Sept. 13, to Brett and Marilyn Wanner, Reamstown, Pa.

Wilhelm, Rhianna Marie, Aug. 31, to Debra (Heinrichs) and Randy Wilhelm, Henderson, Neb.

Wintermote, Victoria Faith, Aug. 20, to Jeff and Tammy (Vogt) Wintermote, Archbold, Ohio.

Young, Cayden Bret, Aug. 29, to B.J. and Lisa (Krehbiel) Young, Berryton, Kan.

Zimmerman, Elijah, Aug. 18, to Deb (Beck) and Mike Zimmerman, Archbold, Ohio.

Marriages

Alleman/Young: Nathan Alleman, Harrisonburg, Va., and Karen Young, Punxsutawney, Pa., July 7 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Berk/Lantz: Randall Berk, Lyons, Ohio, and Sandra Lantz, Lyons, Aug. 19 at Inlet Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Boyes/Hildebrant: Christa Boyes, Grindrod, B.C., and Michael Hildebrant, Salem, Ore., July 28 at Salmon Arm, B.C.

Branam/Swartley: Kate Branam, Wichita, Kan., and Andre Swartley, Hesston, Kan., Aug. 4 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Clark/Stephan: Evelyn Clark, Kinzer, Pa., and Matthew Stephan, Oakland, N.J., Aug. 4 at Leacock Presbyterian Church, Intercourse, Pa.

DeYoung/Sterk: Ronald DeYoung, Brook, Ind., and Julie Ann Sterk, Rensselaer, Ind., July 21 at Demotte, Ind.

Donahue/Ingram: Glenn Thomas Donahue, Lafayette, Ind., and Kristina Lynn Ingram, Lafayette, Aug. 11 at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind.

Durso/Schultz: Anthony Durso, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Kristi Schultz, Monroeville, Ind., Aug. 4 at Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne.

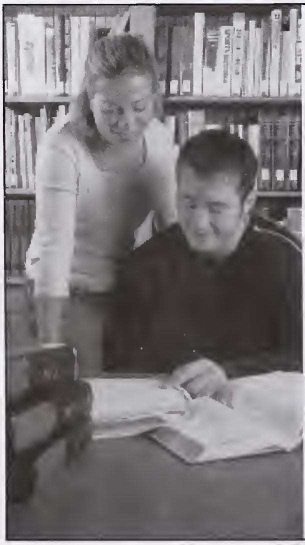
Hochstetler/Rich: Eric Hochstetler, Tialand, and Rebecca Rich, Archbold, Ohio, Aug. 11 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Hodgson/Sawatzky: Jon Hodgson and Melissa Sawatzky, Windom, Kan., July 21 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Kauffman/Yoder: Carl D. Kauffman, Wolford, N.D., and Kristin R. Yoder, Ridgeley, W.Va., July 7 at Martin Chapel, Harrisonburg, Va.

Kirby/Yoder: Bethany Kirby, Waynesboro, Va., and Jeremy Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va., Aug. 18 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Lehman/Nafziger: Christine Lehman, Lititz, Pa., and Patrick Nafziger, Wellman, Iowa, Sept. 1 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.



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Schloneger/Witmer: Kim Schloneger, Columbiana, Ohio, and Roger Witmer, Salem, Ohio, Aug. 4 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Baer, Alvey S., 90, Chambersburg, Pa., died July 13. Spouse: Elizabeth Kuhns Baer (deceased). Parents: Abram and Amanda Showalter Baer (deceased). Survivors: children Gladys Shank, Harold, Marie Davis, Esther Mast, David; 17 grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 16 at Mount Zion Mennonite Church, Boonesboro, Md.

Boller, Mary Shetler, 94, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 29. Spouse: Willard Boller (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Anna Hochstetler Shetler (deceased). Survivor: son Gary. Funeral: Sept. 4 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Cender, Alva John, 88, Fisher, Ill., died Aug. 26. Spouse: Edna Cender (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Miller, Annette Williams, Kathy Martin, John, Ruth Reaves, Mark; 17 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher.

Christophel, Theron J., 82, Goshen, Ind., died July 31. Spouse: Charlene Showalter Christophel. Parents: John and Cora Nice Christophel (deceased). Other survivors: children Sandra Buss, Shirlee, Ronda Miller, Roger; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Detweiler, Margaret (Peg) Landes, 89, Harleysville, Pa., died Sept. 3 of coronary artery disease. Spouse: Roland Detweiler (deceased). Parents: Henry and Clara Schlosser Landes (deceased). Survivors: son R. Glen; two grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 6 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Deumling, Jacob, 17, Rickreall, Ore., died July 7 of drowning. Parents: Dieter (deceased) and Sarah Deumling. Memorial service: July 12 at Rickreall.

Fisher, Hilda Gingerich, 80, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 23 during heart surgery. Spouse: Vernon Fisher. Parents: Charles and Nettie Miller Gingerich (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Cheryl Monemi; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Goering, Martha Kaufman, 93, Moundridge, Kan., died July 26. Spouse: Phil Goering (deceased). Parents: Peter P. and Maria Goering Kaufman (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Becker, Joan Johnson, Norma Moeller, Kenneth, William; 15 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 28 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Graves, Elsie Bartel, 89, Tulsa, Okla., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Isaak G. Graves (deceased). Parents: Heinrich and Mary Nickel Bartel (deceased). Survivors: children Chester, Gene, Virgil, Mary Sue Voth, Melvin; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 28 at Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Gross, Elizabeth L., 89, Souderton, Pa., died Aug. 29. Parents: Abram and Sarah Lapp Gross (deceased). Funerals: Sept. 3 at Souderton Mennonite Home and Sept. 4 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hartzler, Ralph G., 82, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Blanche Murray Hartzler. Parents: Irvin and Susie Sutter Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Miller, Joella, Kay Reist, Dwain, David, Murray; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 27 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Helmuth, Joseph G., 79, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 23. Spouse: Mary Miller Helmuth. Parents: George and Susie Schrock Helmuth (deceased). Other survivors: children Dee Birkey, Carol Honderick, Elaine Jarvis, Anita Showalter; 11 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Goshen, Ind.

Hendricks, Mabel, 90, Green Lane, Pa., died Aug. 24 of heart disease. Spouse: Marvin Hendricks. Parents: Mahlon and Annie Roe Gross (deceased). Other survivors: children Curt, Pearl Walters, Edie Rupp, Esther Davis, Ruth Gent, Fern Vasey; 13 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Wellspring Church of Skippack (Pa.).

Hooley, Frances Miller, 81, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 18 of cancer. Spouse: Richard Hooley (deceased). Parents: Claude and Edna Miller Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Steve, Elaine, Rex, Mark; three grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Bonneyville Mennonite Church, Bristol, Ind.

Horst, Pauline Martin, 74, Columbiana, Ohio, died Aug. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Melvin Ezra Horst. Parents: Harvey and Olive Myers Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Joanne Lehman, Melva Huebert, Karen Cobb; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Jaberg, Robert, 84, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Sept. 1 of a heart attack. Spouse: Pearl Miller Jaberg (deceased). Parents: Robert and Mary Miller Jaberg (deceased). Survivors: children Clair, Michael; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Jantz, Helen Hiebert, 85, McPherson, Kan., died Aug. 25. Spouse: Freeman Jantz (deceased). Parents: Peter E. and Aganetha (Schmidt) Hiebert (deceased). Survivors: children Clara, Doris, Bobby, Melvin; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Kinsinger, Ella Hochstetler, 94, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 29. Spouse: Russell Kinsinger (deceased). Parents: Elias and Lydia Ann Gingerich Hochstetler (deceased). Survivors: children Marilyn Slaubaugh Fisher, Myrna Farraj; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Kalona.

Leidig, Debra Anne, 39, Mount Pleasant, Mich., died Sept. 1. Parents: Melvin and Lois Leidig. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Short Funeral Home, Archbold, Ohio.

Rensberger, Myrtle Gingerich, 82, Parnell, Iowa, died Sept. 4. Spouse: Leonard Rensberger (deceased). Parents: Charles and Nettie Miller Gingerich (deceased). Survivors: children Roy, Francis, Sharon Plank, Alta Wagner; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell.

Schrock, Mabel Neumann, 95, Metamora, Ill., died Aug. 30. Spouse: Arthur Schrock (deceased). Parents: Henry and Elizabeth Hartman Neumann (deceased). Survivors: son Richard; four grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; three stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington, Ill.

Shetler, Delmar, 86, Hollsopple, Pa., died Sept. 3. Spouse: Elnora Gindlesperger Shetler (deceased). Parents: David and Catherine Yoder Shetler (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, Marlin, David; seven grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 6 at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa.

Stauffer Wingerd, Lisa, 29, Minneapolis, died Aug. 12 of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. Spouse: Isaac Stauffer Wingerd. Parents: Don and Elizabeth Stauffer. Funerals: Aug. 15 at Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, and Aug. 18 at Bonneyville Mennonite Church, Bristol, Ind.

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During this time of national crisis, we grieve the loss of each life, pray for wisdom for our leaders and call our church to speak of peace.

You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven.
—Matthew 5:43-45a

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Gordon Houser

Hope today and to the end

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.—Psalm 42:5b, 11b; 43:5b

Given the tragedy of Sept. 11 and all the anxiety and uncertainty that come with it, many of us may sympathize with the psalmist's question—"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?"—which precedes the answer quoted above.

In these times, at all times, we need hope as much as we need food and water. Hope brings us the energy to live. Without it we die. It also brings us the energy to love. Without it we cannot follow our Lord Jesus.

Yet hope is not merely an escape clause, a destination to look forward to after the world ends. It is a resource for living each day. It is keeping aware that God's reign is among us here and now.

Many Christians do not believe this. They act as if they are atheists. God will not do much for us now, but eventually, our enemies will get their just desserts. Such people tend to read the book of Revelation as a futuristic book and try to guess when these things might happen.

Hope is not merely an escape clause, a destination to look forward to after the world ends. It is a resource for living each day. It is keeping aware that God's reign is among us here and now.

Others want to do God's work of vengeance and ignore Paul's admonition to "never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God" (Romans 12:19).

However, as J. Denny Weaver writes (page 10), "Our faith and hope rest in the resurrection of Jesus rather than in any earthly, political entity."

When we witness uncertainty and suffering, such as the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, we can turn to Jesus for hope because he faced suffering and death and conquered. Equally important is the way he conquered—not as a roaring lion (or cruise missile) but as a lamb.

J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., wrote an article about Revelation in the Oct. 25, 1999, issue of *Christianity Today*. In it he sums up the basic message of the biblical book thus: "Wake up! John called to first-century Christians in Asia Minor. You are compromising faithfulness to Jesus in order to fit into a pagan world. Wake up! Rome is a Beast that takes its power from Satan and receives worship that belongs to God (Revelation 13). Wake up! This city and its empire are full of violence and idolatry. God is about to call Rome and its allies to judgment."

Christians in John's day experienced persecution, suffering, death. They faced temptations to submit to the ways of the pagan world around them, to bow to Rome's power. They were seduced by wealth and apathy. On the island of Patmos, John met "one like the Son of Man" (Revelation 1:13) and was told to "write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this" (1:19).

The word "hope" does not appear in Revelation, yet that is the book's message. In the context of sin and unfaithfulness, of persecution and death, God's Spirit comes among us to give us the strength to remain faithful to the Lamb who was slain.

I once heard someone say, "Much of faith is just hanging in there." Hope allows us to hang in, to keep walking in the steps of Jesus, to remain faithful to God's call in our life.

If the Sept. 11 attacks did nothing else, they helped us who live in the United States realize that being peacemakers in a world of so much violence and vengeance will not be easy. It will cost us. To remain faithful in such a world, we must look to the Lamb who has conquered death. We must draw on the hope God's Spirit gives us.

A song by Mennonite pastor and musician Chuck Neufeld includes these lines: "We have seen enough sadness in life. / Give us hope to the end."

In these times of turmoil and uncertainty, of clamor for retaliation and of exalting ourselves above others, let us remember these words of Paul: "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer" (Romans 12:12).—*gh*

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the Mennonite

October 2, 2001

hope out of the ruins

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Hate and anger

Re "What Awakens in Us?" (editorial, Sept. 18): One is reminded of the need for editors to be careful about what is repeated. One should in no way diminish the horrific attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. As Christian citizens, we share the anger and grief of this hour.

The editorial's call for understanding of what U.S. policies and behavior look like abroad is timely and might well be one focus for *The Mennonite* over some time.

The editorial also refers to Palestinians who celebrated in the streets. We know that news photographers go where the action is. But there are many Palestinian people who deplore acts of violence in the Middle East and now certainly condemn the horrific crimes we have witnessed in this country.—*Urbane Peachey, Ephrata, Pa.*

Everett J. Thomas got it right in his editorial, especially in asking the question, "Why is this hate and anger directed toward our country?" Now, is there someone who can share Thomas' answer with President Bush, Congress and the heads of big American businesses who are so bent on making all the world feed their desire for success, economic gain and power, regardless of how it enslaves, impoverishes and grinds down other nations and people?—*Marvin H. Ewert, Newton, Kan.*

Revenge is not the answer

Just as everyone else was, I was completely shocked when I first turned on my TV Tuesday morning, Sept. 11. Watching the clip of the World Trade Center crumbling to the ground was something that I never thought I would have to see. But I was quickly filled with a sense of terror. I was, and still am, scared of the response our country would have to this catastrophe. Every politician that I listened to was crying for blood. And most of this from those who ran on a campaign of family values.

As a peace church, we need to show people that revenge is not the answer. Even in his moment of dying, Christ was able to pray for his enemies. Why can we not do the same thing? Why do we have to continue this cycle of violence by retaliating? If we continue to call these terrorists cowardly, why can we not be the brave ones who use our resources to help the injured instead of using them to fight back? If we retaliate, the next attack on our country will only be worse.

As I walk through the campus of Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., I am stopped every few steps by chalk writing on the ground that says things such as "Kill the terrorists!!" and "Nuke 'em until they glow!!" It makes me so ashamed to be associated with these people. We must continue to pray that God will allow us to forgive our enemies and also forgive those who have such a twisted outlook on things. My biggest hope is that we, as a country, do not make this situation worse than it already is.—*Blake Gingerich, West Lafayette, Ind.*

Answering the question

In the Sept. 4 editorial ("Necessities for a Radical Conversion"), Everett J. Thomas asks, "Must a Mennonite be a pacifist?" A far more pertinent question is, Must a Christian be a pacifist? To raise the standard for entrance into the Mennonite denomination above what is required of the Christian church makes us elitist and squarely in the camp of the Pharisees.

To be a peacemaker is a commendable virtue, but to enforce our particular method of what we think is right on everyone else is a type of thinking of which cults are composed. With all the splits and factions within our own denomination, are we really qualified to spread our ideas of peace?

Several letters have recently been published that seem to berate our president's decision on a tax rebate. Now there appears to be a concerted effort to see who can be the most godly in the dispersion of their refunds, which you would think was blood money. Shall we hire a band so everyone knows what we are giving?

We are fast leaving our heritage of barn-raisings and quiltings and replacing it with demonstrations and other political activism. The result is that we find ourselves aligned with some very strange bedfellows, prompting the absurd question asked in the editorial, "Can a pacifist be a Mennonite without believing that Jesus is the only way to our heavenly father?" When a denomination leaves its position of servanthood and seeks to become politically empowered, it's only a matter of time until it finds it is no longer empowered by the living God.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton Ohio*

Thomas asks some tough questions about pacifism and the exclusivity of Christ in the context of membership and Mennonite identity. He rightly raises the issue in the climate of postmodernism. As a postmodern, I read the

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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ay readers say

article from a different perspective. Trying to answer the question in terms of a teaching position will miss the mark. At the same time, an intellectual understanding of the relationship between peace and the gospel, and exclusivity and the gospel, will also fall short. The fullness of Jesus Christ can never be reduced to teaching positions and theological constructs. Jesus Christ is not a classroom subject; he is a person who is real, alive and willing to have a relationship with us. The way we live is not the result of intellectual adherence to a theological position. The way we live is a result of a real relationship, with a real person, Jesus Christ. It does us no good to say that peace is the heart of the gospel and Jesus is the only way to God if we deny that very proclamation by the way we live together and in the world. The challenge of postmodernity is authenticity. We need to draw hard lines like Thomas suggests, but our work does not end there; it only begins. We then need to become an authentic people of God. Authentic living is the mark of truth.—*Michael Danner, Roanoke, Ill.*

Money, sex and power

The Sept. 4 issue had a very interesting article by C. Norman Kraus about retaining our belief in peace in the Mennonite church ("Is Our Peace Base Eroding?" Speaking Out). I think it was well stated, and I agree with him. However, one could expand the scope to include other issues, such as the pursuit of wealth, sexual behavior (whether homosexual or extramarital heterosexual), divorce and one's rights. The arguments would seem to fit regardless of the issue. It would seem to me that a Christian has only one right, and that is the right to surrender all his or her rights to Jesus Christ. Not easy, but does that not agree with "turn the other cheek"?—*James Faul, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover art
by Merrill R. Miller

Hope out of the ruins

The challenge of terror

A Mennonite expert on conflict mediation offers suggestions for the way ahead.

by John Paul Lederach

Stranded for eight days returning home from Colombia to Virginia, I penned these observations. These are drawn from 20 years of mediating in violent situations around the globe, where cycles of revenge seem bent on perpetuating themselves and where movements find ways of justifying their part in that cycle. Here are some lessons about the challenges facing our nation. Mennonites may find this analysis helpful in their conversations with others.

Five challenges

1. Understand the root of the anger. How do people reach this level of anger, hatred and frustration? Anger of this sort—generational, identity-based anger—builds over time through a combination of events, a threat to identity and experiences of sustained exclusion. Our response to the attacks will affect whether we reinforce and provide the soil, seeds and nutrients for future cycles of revenge and violence, or whether the cycle changes. We should avoid doing what such terrorists expect, which is the giant lashing out against the weak, the many against the few. This will only reinforce their ability to perpetrate the myth that they are under threat, fighting an irrational and mad system that has never taken them seriously and wishes to destroy them and their people. We need to destroy their myth, not their people.

2. Understand the organization. Over years of working to promote durable peace in situations of sustained violence, I have discovered that movements and organizations that use violence have one purpose: Sustain thyself. They do this through decentralization of power and structure, secrecy, autonomy of action through units, and refusal to pursue the conflict based on the strength of the enemy.

This is not a struggle to be conceived of in terms of physical places that, if located, can be destroyed, thereby ridding us of the problem. Our biggest and most visible weapon systems are mostly useless. We need a new metaphor. I think of a virus because of its ability to enter unperceived, flow with a system and harm it from within.

This is the genius of people like Osama bin Laden. He understands the power of a free and open system and has used it to his benefit. The enemy is not located in a territory. It has entered our system. And you do not fight this kind of enemy by shooting at it. You respond by strengthening the capacity of the system to prevent the virus and strengthen its immunity. Our greatest threat is not in Afghanistan but in our own backyard. We are not going to bomb Travelocity, Hertz Rental Car or an airline training school in Florida. We must change metaphors and move beyond the reaction that we can duke it out with the bad guy, or we risk creating the environment that sustains and reproduces the virus we wish to prevent.

3. Remember that realities are constructed. Conflict happens when people construct different perceptions and interpretations of reality. We see the other side as fanatics, madmen, irrational. But from their point of view, they are not mad or irrational. All things fall together and make sense. When their experiences reinforce their views (for example, years of superpower struggle that used or excluded them, encroaching Western values of what is considered immoral by their religious interpretation or an enemy image that is overwhelmingly powerful and uses that power in bombing campaigns and always appears to win), then it is not difficult to construct a rational worldview of heroic struggle against evil. We do it; so do they. Listen to the words we use to justify our actions, then listen to the words they use.

The way to break such a cycle of justified violence is to step outside of it. This starts with understanding that TV sound bites about madmen and evil are not good bases for policy. The most significant impact we can make on terrorists' ability to sustain their view of us as evil is to change their perception of who we are by responding in unexpected ways. This will take courage and leadership capable of envisioning a horizon of change.

4. Understand recruitment. The greatest power terror has is the ability to regenerate itself. What stands out most in all my experiences in deep-rooted conflict are the ways political leaders wishing to end the violence believed they could achieve it by overpowering and getting rid of the perpetrator of the violence. That may have been the lesson of earlier centuries, but it is not the lesson from the past 30 years. When people feel threat, exclusion and generational experiences of direct violence, their greatest effort is placed on survival.

These movements show an extraordinary capacity for the regeneration of chosen myths and renewed struggle. The emphasis should be on removing the channels, justifications and sources that attract and sustain recruitment into violent activities. None of the perpetrators

We must not provide the movements we deplore with gratuitous fuel for self-regeneration, fulfilling their prophecies by providing them with martyrs and justifications.

in the recent attacks was much older than 40, and many were half that age. This is the reality we face: Recruitment happens on a sustained basis. It will not stop with the use of military force. In fact, open warfare will create the soils in which it is fed and grows. Military action to destroy terror, particularly as it affects significant and already vulnerable civilian populations, will be like hitting a fully mature dandelion with a golf club. We will participate in sustaining the myth of why we are evil and will assure yet another generation of recruits.

5. Understand the power of simplicity. We have failed to fully comprehend the power of simplicity. From the standpoint of the perpetrators, the effectiveness of their actions was in finding simple ways to use the system to undo it. Our greatest task is to find equally creative and simple tools on the other side.

Three suggestions

Here are three things to do that will have a much greater impact on these challenges than seeking accountability through revenge.

1. Energetically pursue a sustainable peace process to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The United States has much it can do to support and make this process work. We should bring the same energy to building an international coalition for peace in this conflict that we have pursued in building international coalitions for war, particularly in the Middle East. Create a whole new view of what we stand for as a nation. Rather than fighting terror with force, we enter terrorists' system and take away one of their most coveted elements: the soils of generational conflict perceived as injustice used to perpetrate hatred and recruitment.

The biggest blow we can serve terror is to make it irrelevant. The worst thing we could do is to feed it unintentionally by making it and its leaders the center stage of what we do.

2. Invest financially in development, education and a broad social agenda in the countries surrounding Afghanistan rather than destroying the Taliban in a search for Osama bin Laden. The single greatest pressure that could ever be put on bin Laden is to remove the source of his justifications and alliances. The West and the United States should ask countries such as Pakistan, Tajikistan and, yes, Iran and Syria, How can we help you meet the fundamental needs of your people? To change the nature of how the terror we witnessed Sept. 11 reproduces itself, we must develop quality relationships with whole regions, peoples and worldviews. If we strengthen those relationships, we weaken and eventually eliminate the soil where terror is born. Let's do the unexpected. Let's create new strategic alliances never before thought possible.

3. Pursue a diplomatic but dynamic support of the Arab League (a voluntary association of Arabic-speaking countries) to address the root causes of discontent in numerous regions. We should explore how to create a web of ethics that builds from the heart and soul of all traditions but that creates a capacity for each to engage the roots of violence in their own traditions. Rather than convincing others that our way of life, religion or structure of governance is better, we should be honest about the sources of violence in our own house and invite others to do the same. Let's show that life-giving ethics are rooted in the core of all peoples by engaging in genuine dialogue and relationship. This will have an impact on the roots of terror far greater in the generation of our children's children than any amount of military action can possibly muster.

A call for the unexpected

We need to think differently about the challenges of terror. We must not give the movements we deplore gratuitous fuel for self-regeneration, fulfilling their prophecies by providing them with martyrs and justifications. The power of their action is the simplicity with which they pursue the fight with global power. They changed the game, entered our lives, our homes, our workplaces and turned our own tools to our demise.

We need to change the game again. Let us give birth to the unexpected.

John Paul Lederach is professor of international peacebuilding at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind., working part of the time as a practitioner, and he is a distinguished scholar at the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

God in the aftermath

by Jessica Smucker

it's quick
but it feels like finally

finally

he reaches
for the rubble, from the sky

removing arms
from jacket sleeves
and fingers
from rings

delicate as if
reverence mattered.

After the WTC devastation, Sept. 18, 2001

Jessica Smucker lives in Macomb, Ill.

Hope out of the ruins

Grief and critique

A prophetic approach to the acts of terrorism

by Ted Grimsrud

The prophet Jeremiah is incredibly relevant for us as we seek to come to terms with the events of Sept. 11. His contribution to our thinking and feeling and responding as people of faith to our current crisis lies in his powerful uniting of two themes.

Jeremiah combined (1) heart-rending grief over the suffering of his fellow citizens with (2) an unapologetic critique of his nation's idolatry, which had brought on this suffering. Grief and critique—one without the other is either superficial or callous, either subject to manipulation by power politics or subject to unfeeling self-righteousness.

The prophet writes, "O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people!" (Jeremiah 9:1).

Jeremiah gives us words for our feelings of horror and sadness at the more than 6,000 violent deaths and the countless other lives that have been turned upside down from this tragedy. You can't help but be moved to tears over and over as you hear of the heartache, the fears, the anxieties. And think of the people on the ground who received desperate cellphone calls from loved ones on the hijacked planes.

What is sadly and dramatically missing in the god-talk of our nation's leaders is any sense that these acts of violence—evil as they are—should challenge us to consider repenting of the "American way of life."

Such grief is linked with the heart of God. There can be no question that the acts that caused such suffering were evil. There can be no question that the devil was laughing in delight as the planes plowed into their targets.

Yet the prophets would have us do more than grieve. What is sadly and dramatically missing in the god-talk of our nation's leaders is any sense that these acts of violence—evil as they are—should challenge us to consider repenting of the "American way of life." Jeremiah was clear that the way of life of his fellow citizens—the images, foreign idols, lies, denial of justice and righteousness—was at the root of their suffering.

God's finger: The prophets understood the events of their day with some subtlety. They saw God's finger in the human (and evil) acts of the Babylonian attack of ancient Israel. They portrayed these events as having two levels of meaning—acts of bloodthirsty aggression by human beings sold out to evil, but also expressions of God's judgment against God's people and their institutions for the injustice and violence of those people. The prophets understood the occurrence of the evil acts of the Babylonians as a time to look inward with a critical eye.

This is what scattered voices are challenging us to do today as well. I have been enlightened by the responses of some of my international friends. One spoke of watching TV and feeling a sense of internal division. He grieved for the loss of life and condemned those who committed the terrible acts, he said. However, he couldn't help but think of these acts as retaliation against symbols of American oppression, as violent people responding violently to the violence of the United States.

A British journalist, John Pilger, in an online commentary, mentions a few of these past acts of violence. On Sept. 9, just two days before the destruction of the World Trade Center towers—American and British bombers killed eight people in bombing raids over civilian areas of Iraq. About 200,000 Iraqis were killed during the so-called Gulf War 10 years ago. At least 500,000 more Iraqis, half of them children, have died since then, due to the embargo. How many Americans know that Osama bin Laden began his "terrorist" work in Afghanistan as a client of the CIA fighting the Russians and that his terrorist training camps were originally built with American money and backing?

Political scientist Chalmers Johnson wrote a prophetic book that came out last year, *Blowback: The Cost and Consequences of American Empire*. He details how again and again the United States has supported violence around the world in ways that have in time turned on us with unintended consequences.

It may be most hopeful and sustaining to think of our work as being done for two generations from now.

Blowback. As rock singer Lou Reed wrote, "If you spit in the wind, it comes back at you twice as hard."

For people who believe that God's will for human beings is always wholeness and peace, these next several months and years will be challenging. The prophets give us guidance. Their way was to challenge the status quo and conventional wisdom of their day. As a result, they were called naive and impractical, even irresponsible.

Are we willing to be called naive and impractical, even irresponsible? We may be facing a season such as pacifists faced 60 years ago, the last time U.S. territory was attacked, at Pearl Harbor. They spoke out when they could, but to some degree they had to wait the war out, since few Americans listened to them.

Time bombs: However, think about the prophets. They spoke out when they could; they wrote what they could. And they were ignored. We probably don't realize how irrelevant they were in their own time because the main records we have are their own writings, not transcripts from the CNN broadcasts of their day. But the words of the prophets were, if you will pardon the expression, time bombs. These were the words that enabled the community of faith to survive.

It may be most hopeful and sustaining to think of our work as being done for two generations from now. That is, pacifists may not be listened to in our society right now. But we must not despair. We have words of enduring value: Love your enemies; beat your swords into plowshares; let justice and peace embrace; there is no way to peace, peace is the way. Let's continue to think them and speak them and write them, then have hope that they will not return void.

In her book *Powers of the Weak*, Elizabeth Janeway writes that people without obvious power have two main strategies to follow, strategies that will empower us. The first is to disbelieve the story we get from the powers that be. Redemptive violence is a myth, a lie of the devil. We may choose for ourselves how to think of our so-called enemies. Our nature does not require taking an eye for an eye until all are blind.

The second strategy is to band together. Let us find communities that will sustain us. I can't put into words how grateful I have been in recent days for my friends and family, colleagues and email correspondents. I know I will not be alone. Let us join with other Christians, with Muslims and Jews, Buddhists and humanists, who share our conviction that justice and peace matter more than nationality.

This article is based on a sermon at Shalom Mennonite Congregation, Harrisonburg, Va. Ted Grimsrud teaches theology and peace studies at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

A call for Christians to stand with threatened neighbors

On Sept. 15, in the Los Angeles suburb of San Gabriel, two men entered the store of Adel Karas, shot the Egyptian-American grocer, then left in a waiting car. The cash register was full of $20 bills; all the money was left. "It was an Arab store—that's all that mattered to the killers," says Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) reservist Shady Hakim of Pasadena. "Anything with an Arabic name or Arabic writing—not just mosques; Coptic and other Eastern Orthodox churches; people who have no idea they are in danger."

Hakim is also Egyptian-American. Born in Egypt, he has lived there and worked with CPT in Israel and Palestine. "Adel was a Coptic Christian, a friend of my uncle. He attended church with my uncle and my parents," says Hakim. "As Arab Christians, they think of themselves as very different from Muslims, and so they do not think of taking precautions—but the average American bigot doesn't see the difference."

By Sept. 13, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee had a list of assaults (verbal and physical) and vandalism of mosques and Arab businesses two pages long. By Sept. 17, they had documented 200 attacks.

Within hours of the Sept. 11 attack, Jonathan Larson, pastor of Berea Mennonite Church in Atlanta, felt the Spirit urging him toward a mosque near his home. He shared his leading with others on an urban ministry email list: "(A)ll about us now, those of Middle Eastern origin, and Muslims, more generally, will be feeling vulnerable as the blood-blinded chorus seeking revenge begins to swell. So I have determined to find a masjjid/mosque where I might pray with those present."

Jonathan went to prayers at the mosque and had "an absolutely unforgettable encounter." His witness is spreading: Marilyn McGinnis said that after seeing Jonathan's message, she called the president of the Arab Student Association at Georgia Tech. She offered to bring cookies to their next meeting to show support. He was astonished at the call. "Just by calling you have brought a smile to my face," he said.

CPT urges Christians to look for Middle Eastern or Muslim neighbors to offer support during this upsurge of racist attacks. Discuss whether there are things you can do to help with their safety. Exchange phone numbers, tell them to call in a crisis. Form a small team at church to maintain contact. For advice on contacting Arab and Muslim groups in your area, contact Rich Meyer, 13416 CR 44, Millersburg IN 46543, 219-642-3920, <cptcsd@npcc.net>.—*Rich Meyer, CPT*

Pax spirit lives on

Celebration draws 600 despite terrorist attack

SYRACUSE, Ind.—About 600 people celebrated a peace witness of the past on Sept. 14-16, even as world events reminded them that peacemakers are needed just as much today. They observed the 50th anniversary of Pax, a Mennonite Central Committee overseas voluntary service program from 1951 to 1976.

Many young men joined Pax as an alternative to military service during the years when the United States had a draft and fought wars in Korea and Vietnam. Celebrating Pax at a time when a new war looms as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks made the reunion even more meaningful.

"The attacks remind us that we're not past an earlier time of war, anger and hatred. … The reunion reminds us that there's a peace tradition we can draw from," said Cal Redekop of Harrisonburg, Va., one of Pax's founders and a reunion planner.

During Pax's 25 years, more than 1,150 men, ages 18 to 21, drew from their Anabaptist pacifist tradition to serve in about 42 countries. In addition, 25 to 30 women served as matrons to oversee the units' domestic life, and young men from Canada also volunteered, though Canada did not have a draft.

Participants built homes for refugees in post-World War II West Germany, developed agriculture in Greece, built roads in Paraguay, provided medical and educational assistance in Vietnam, resettled indigenous people in Bolivia and more.

"There we were, a bunch of 19- and 20-year-olds, most of us with very little understanding of history," said Donald Schierling of Denver, who served from 1954 to 1957 in Backnang, West Germany, and Panayitsa, Greece. "Very few of us who went into Pax had expertise, and yet the opportunity and structure were provided that, along with our determination, allowed each of us to … to accomplish a lot.

"Perhaps we can't go back to Pax just the way it was. But we can take from the spirit of this unbelievable model, one which relied on commitment."

That commitment was apparent in the efforts of Pax participants and their spouses to reach the reunion despite flight cancellations due to airline shutdowns. Many people drove cross-country or carpooled to the northern Indiana inn where the reunion was held. Redekop said there were only about 40 cancellations.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Wayne Schertz (left) of Goshen, Ind., and Leron Peters of Omaha, Neb., look at photos of people they served while working with Pax in Jordan in the late 1950s. Schertz and Peters were among the 600 people who attended a Pax 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 14-16 in Syracuse, Ind.

The reunion included keynote speakers, personal testimonies, unit reunions and workshops, drama, a multimedia historical presentation, memorials to those who died in service, worship with Communion and a Pax chorus.

A committee also drafted a response to the terrorist attacks, calling for a nonviolent solution to the crisis. Reunion participants approved the statement, which was sent to leaders in the United States, Canada and the United Nations.

Much of the event revolved around stories of Pax participants and recipients, such as Arno Thimm of the Netherlands, who spoke about how Pax affected his family and his faith. He was a son of the refugee family that moved into the first house built by the Pax unit in Enkenbach, West Germany, in 1953.

"[My decision to go into pastoral ministry] all started because of people who wanted to build peace and bridges and friendship," said Thimm, a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., who served pastorates in Germany and the Netherlands.
—Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse

Program's work crossed gender lines

Pax turned Anna Ewert into a beauty queen.

She had gone to Enkenbach, West Germany, in 1955 to serve as a matron to the Pax men there. On her first day on the job, one of the volunteers introduced her to the people in the village where Pax was building refugee houses.

"He brought me to a group of people and said, 'Everyone, I'd like to introduce you to Miss America,' " recalled Ewert at Pax's 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 14-16.

"I was shocked, yet so delighted," said Ewert, who lives in Bingham Lake, Minn. "It showed me that even with all this hard work, there'd be some fun, too."

She was one of 25 to 30 single and married women who oversaw the units' domestic life, serving as mother, maid, counselor and nurse.

"I didn't come into Pax to be a matron but to be supportive of my husband [Virgil]," said Louise Claassen of Elkhart, Ind., who served in Crete, Greece and Jordan from 1959 to 1963.

"But when I first arrived, there were dirty dishes in the sink," she said. "The first thing I did was wash dishes. From then on, I was the matron."—*Meetinghouse*

MCC to send food assistance to Afghan refugees in wake of fears of U.S. retaliation for attacks

AKRON, Pa.—While Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is responding to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks with counseling for New Yorkers, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is gearing up to assist in Afghanistan, where fears of U.S. military retaliation have led to a surge of refugees.

Afghans are fleeing the cities and amassing in camps already filled with more than 2.5 million refugees who have fled a four-year drought and more than 20 years of war. MCC is planning to provide food through the Iranian Red Crescent Society, the Iranian equivalent of the Red Cross.

Since 1995, MCC, which has no workers in Afghanistan, has contributed $4 million in aid to the country, including $474,000 earmarked this year for widows and tuberculosis patients. MCC may redirect portions of this assistance, plus additional contributions, to the increasing number of refugees.

The Red Crescent had planned to help some of the half million refugees now gathered in Herat, a city in western Afghanistan near the Iranian border. But aid workers may not be permitted to enter Afghanistan, so the Red Crescent may instead help refugees who have crossed the border into Iran.

Iran and Pakistan recently closed their borders, but large sections lie in remote areas, so some refugees are getting across. Thousands more are gathered at the closed border crossings.

Meanwhile, MDS continues to assist New York Mennonite pastors with grief counseling and peacemaking training. Joe Steiner, social work professor emeritus at the University of Syracuse (N.Y.), is coordinating the project.

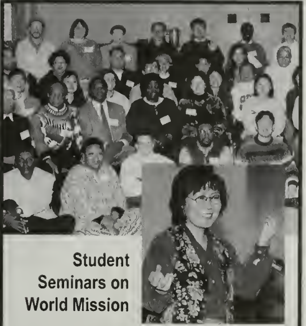
The Federal Emergency Management Agency is asking that no more volunteers or donated goods be sent to the disaster sites. News reports have described a system overwhelmed by volunteers and recently arrived clothing and food piling up unused in parking lots.

"MDS understands the disappointment felt by those who were hoping to serve," says a statement from the agency.

Earlier, MCC and MDS together sent a one-time delivery of clothing and wash cloths to rescue workers in New York.—*MCC News Service*

Correction: Goshen (Ind.) College student Adam Tice won a hymn contest. He was misidentified in the Sept. 18 issue.

Clarification re "Absence of Denominational Peace Statements Filed With Selective Service Not Cause for Concern" (Aug. 28): The U.S. Selective Service will not assume sincerity of a draftee's conscientious objector beliefs simply because he is part of a particular religious group.



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Health-care network could become fifth program agency of Mennonite Church USA

GOSHEN, Ind.—Even before Mennonite Church USA officially starts, its Executive Board is considering expanding the new denomination's number of program agencies.

In a Sept. 15 conference call, board members approved exploring adding Mennonite Health Services (MHS) to the four agencies already on the roster: Mennonite Education Agency, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Mutual Aid and Mennonite Publishing House Inc.

MHS, headquartered in Goshen, is a network of 60 Mennonite, Mennonite Brethren and Brethren in Christ hospitals, developmental disability services, mental health programs, retirement and nursing homes and other related ministries across the United States, plus one in Manitoba. Another 65 organizations could become part of MHS, says president Rick Stiffney.

"These organizations have much to offer the church, and they are strengthened through higher visibility and higher accountability to the church," he says.

MHS, which sponsors 15 of the organizations, provides members with strategic planning, board development, employee benefit and insurance packages and more.

The exploration process could generate a recommendation to delegates at the next denominational assembly, scheduled for Atlanta in 2003, that MHS become the fifth Mennonite Church USA program agency.

"The intent is to explore the benefits to the church and to the network," Stiffney says. "Issues of potential cost to provider agencies and increased liability for the church need to be explored."

If approved by delegates in Atlanta, MHS would join Mennonite Mutual Aid as Mennonite Church USA program agencies that are inter-Mennonite in their ministries.

The Sept. 15 conference call—the first Executive Board meeting of the new biennium— was supposed to be a two-day weekend gathering in Chicago. But the Sept. 11 terrorist attack forced the change of venue and abbreviated the agenda. During the conference call, the board

- approved bylaws for the Executive Board, which was incorporated in Indiana effective Aug. 23;
- approved the articles of incorporation and bylaws of Mennonite Education Agency and articles of incorporation for *The Mennonite* Magazine Board;
- appointed Linda Blades of Inglewood, Calif., to the Mennonite Mission Network board.—*Everett J. Thomas*

Travel trouble hits board again

For the fourth time in its eight meetings since it was created, the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board was plagued by travel troubles. The board was scheduled to gather Sept. 15-16 in Chicago. But in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack, the meeting was changed to a 90-minute conference call on Sept. 15.

The board's first meeting, in September 1999 in Chevy Chase, Md., was disrupted by Hurricane Floyd's assault on the East Coast. In February 2001, a blizzard hampered travel to the meeting in Chicago. Then a series of thunderstorms affected travel to and from the June 2000 meeting in Washington.

The board's next meeting is set for Feb. 8-12, 2002, in Dallas.

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MWC executive committee reaffirms Zimbabwe as 2003 assembly site despite country's turmoil

KARLSRUHE, Germany—Mennonite World Conference leadership says it is committed to meeting in Zimbabwe for MWC's next global gathering and standing in solidarity with its people but acknowledge that the country's continuing turmoil could force plans to be reconsidered.

The MWC Executive Committee, meeting Aug. 18-24 in Karlsruhe, reaffirmed its earlier decision to hold the 2003 assembly in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city. The assembly would be the first time for the world Mennonite and Brethren in Christ family to meet in Africa.

But a land crisis has helped plunge the country into economic, social and political instability as blacks have been attacking and seizing white-owned farms.

"Let's move forward with God opening the way," said Fimbo Ganvunze, executive committee member from Congo. "Let's pray and continue to prepare."

In addition to normal logistical work, Zimbabweans are "providing a prayer cover," said Dothan Moyo, a member of the Brethren in Christ in Zimbabwe and national coordinator for the assembly. "Nights and vigils of prayer and prayer camps are being set up," he said.

MWC officials say they will make changes if necessary but are not currently considering changing sites. Bulawayo was selected as the venue for the 2003 assembly over places in Ethiopia, Kenya and Zambia. Zimbabwe is home to 25,000 Brethren in Christ, the largest BIC population in the world.

"Zimbabweans are so looking forward to having us come," said Doris Dube, MWC's Africa regional editor.

The 2003 assembly is expected to feature the release of the first two volumes in MWC's global Mennonite History Project: Latin America and Africa. Each book, as well as subsequent books, will be written by writers from their respective continents. Writers are now being sought for the Europe and North America volumes, project coordinator John A. Lapp told the executive committee.—*MWC News Service*

MWC adds two full-time staff members

Mennonite World Conference (MWC) has expanded its staff with the addition of two full-time associate executive secretaries to assist executive secretary Larry Miller.

Ray Brubacher will be in charge of events and administration, working out of Kitchener, Ont. His primary responsibility for the next two years will be planning the 2003 MWC assembly scheduled for Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Brubacher had been MWC director of special projects since 1999.

Pakisa Tshimika, Fresno, Calif., will be responsible for networks and projects, including the new Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network, a joint program with Mennonite Central Committee. A native of Congo, Tshimika had been directing MWC's Global Gifts Sharing Project. —*MWC News Service*

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SWISS-VOLHYNIAN MENNONITE HERITAGE TOUR (September 18 - October 3)

FAR EAST
VIETNAM (November 6-24)

NORTH AMERICA
ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 19 - July 1) EASTERN CANADA (August 2-12)
HAWAII CRUISE TOUR (February 14-24)
MAJESTIC CANADIAN ROCKIES (July 15-28)

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Oct. 2, 1876—Eastern District Conference holds the first North American Mennonite Sunday school convention.

Central Americans to receive MCC food aid

AKRON, Pa.—As drought threatens 1.5 million people in Central America, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is responding with emergency food aid in Honduras and Nicaragua.

In Honduras, where the situation is most severe, MCC is organizing assistance, including 318 metric tons of corn, 36 metric tons of beans and nine metric tons of rice, all locally grown and worth $117,000. MCC is covering the cost of the beans, while funding for the remainder is pending with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, of which MCC is a member. The supplies will be distributed by the Honduran Brethren in Christ with assistance from MCC.

In Nicaragua, MCC is funding food packets for families in 42 rural communities. Valued at $38,000, the packets will include rice, beans, corn, milk powder and oil. All the packets will feed 2,300 families for two to three weeks. MCC is organizing the project with the Anabaptist Emergency Commission, composed of Nicaragua's three Anabaptist groups.—*MCC News Service*

Somalia reunion draws 60 participants

SALUNGA, Pa.—Twenty Somalis and 40 Eastern Mennonite Missions workers who served in Somalia gathered at EMM headquarters in Salunga for a Labor Day reunion.

EMM started work in Somalia in 1953, and the last missionaries left in 1994.

"As you cannot hide the four legs of the camel, so you cannot hide the fruit of your labor," Ahmed Gedi said.

A former student at Mennonite mission schools in Somalia, Gedi went on to become a government educator. He now lives in Ontario. *—EMM News Service*

Bluffton students join Habitat celebration

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Four students from Bluffton College's chapter of Habitat for Humanity joined with thousands of other volunteers to celebrate the organization's 25th anniversary Sept. 13-16 in Indianapolis.

The weekend included workshops especially for college students, entertainment by musicians Michael McDonald and Sandi Patty and presentations by Habitat for Humanity founder and president Millard Fuller and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

"It was very inspiring," says Bluffton senior April Bullinger. "I came back to Bluffton on such a high. My head is full of creative ideas of what we can do here on campus."

The Bluffton chapter of Habitat for Humanity supports home-building efforts in nearby Lima and holds fund-raising and awareness events on campus.

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Events

Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind., 100th anniversary, Oct. 5-7. For information, contact Cindy Hartman at the church at 219-593-2036 or <emmamc@maplenet.net>.

Michiana Anabaptist Historians fall meeting, Oct. 20, 9 a.m. Contact 219-533-7819.

Births

Drouillard, Kyla Grace, Sept. 1, to John and Cheryl Landis Drouillard, Conestoga, Pa.

Fisher, Sam David, Sept. 4, to Kent Fisher and Lois Hochstetler, Columbus, Ohio.

Good, Kerinna Janae, Sept. 12, to Lee and Rosemary Good, Lititz, Pa.

Koscher, Alexander Michael, Sept. 2, to Kim Taylor and Tim Koscher, South Bend, Ind.

Krabill, Philip Thomas, Aug. 25, to Sally Thomas and Tony Krabill, Elkhart, Ind.

Longenecker, Kara Janae, Sept. 11, to Kevin and Shelby Bauman Longenecker, Harrisonburg, Va.

Mast, Gabriel Isaac, Sept. 13, to Chris and Lynette Mast, Broadway, Va.

Morrison, Connor John, Sept. 7, to Andy and Margie Morrison, Shelby, Neb.

Schwartzentruber, Meganne Carol Marlene, Aug. 31, to Darren and Tammy Osborne Schwartzentruber, Tavistock, Ont.

Waltner, Mason Alan, Aug. 22, to Brent and Betsy Harrington Waltner, McPherson, Kan.

Marriages

Burkholder/Friesen: Guy Burkholder, Lancaster, Pa., and Emily Friesen, Lancaster, Aug. 25 at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Egli/Walters: Anastasia M. Egli, Wolcottville, Ind., and Chad T. Walters, Hellertown, Pa., Aug. 4 at Hellertown.

Frazier/Swartz: Sandi Frazier, Crimora, Va., and Bruce Swartz, Stuarts Draft, Va., Sept. 1 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Hanson/Harder: Melinda Hanson, Lincoln, Neb., and Chris Harder, Portland, Ore., Aug. 25 at Lincoln.

Hess/Histand: Kelly Hess, Mount Joy, Pa., and Aaron Histand, Portland, Ore., Aug. 18 at Mount Joy Mennonite Church.

Miller/Petersheim: Stanton Miller, Hutchinson, Kan., and Judy Kennel Petersheim, Hutchinson, Sept. 1 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Moyer/Yoder: Kristy Moyer, Selinsgrove, Pa., and Brian Yoder, Mifflinburg, Pa., Sept. 1 at Middleburg, Pa.

Stuckey/Wagler: Tyson Lee Stuckey, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Angela Marie Wagler, Jerome, Mich., Sept. 1 at Jackson, Mich.

Wenger/Yoder: Heidi Wenger, Waynesboro, Va., and Brent Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va., Aug. 25 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

Deaths

Amstutz, Florence Badertscher, 93, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 5. Spouse: H. Clair Amstutz (deceased). Parents: John and Ida Sprunger Badertscher (deceased). Survivors: children Barbara Hodel, Vivian Headings, John, Carolyn Patterson, Mabel Blunk, Mary Gilbert; 20 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Bender, Elvera (Vera) Schlegel, 96, Tavistock, Ont., died Sept. 4. Spouse: Abner Bender (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Leah Schlegel (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Yantzi, Joanne Curran; 13 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 7 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Bickel, Ella Mae, 94, Rocky Ford, Colo., died Sept. 2. Spouse: Fred Bickel (deceased). Parents: Anna and Joseph Yoder (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 5 at Rocky Ford Mennonite Church.

Ebersole, Martha Yeager, 91, Chambersburg, Pa., died Sept. 4. Spouse: (1st) Henry R. Ebersole (deceased); (2nd) Samuel K. Ebersole (deceased). Parents: Edward and Annie Ernst Yeager (deceased). Survivors: children Ralph, Esther Wadel; stepchildren Fannie Strite, Raymond; 10 grandchildren; 12 stepgranchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; 24 stepgreat-grandchildren.

Hostetler, John A., 82, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 28. Spouse: (1st) Hazel Schrock Hostetler (deceased); (2nd) Beulah Stauffer Hostetler. Parents: Joseph and Nancy Hostetler Hostetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Ann, Mary Hoyt, Laura Liechty; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Leischner, Helen Tallon, 88, Normal, Ill., died Aug. 24. Spouse: Aaron Leischner (deceased). Parents: John and Stella Tallon (deceased). Survivors: children Erma Taylor, Esther Brown, Herman; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 28 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Schweitzer, Roselyn "Belva" Johnson, 76, Milford, Neb., died May 28. Spouse: Burdette Schweitzer (deceased). Parents: Oscar and Rosa Johnson (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Carol Toovey, Kathleen; 11 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 31 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford.

Siemens, Herman, 88, Buhler, Kan., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Clara Siemens. Parents: John P. and Helena Nachtigal Siemens (deceased). Other survivors: children Loretta Kuehny, Janice Albertson, Ellen Malloy, Larry; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Smucker, Blanche Hillman, 90, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 31. Spouse: Orrin Smucker (deceased). Parents: Henry and Lillian Mueller Hillman (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Ann Roth, Carolynn Underwood, Ronald, Richard, Ralph; 14 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 3 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Zehr, Edith, 74, Normal, Ill., died Aug. 29 of cancer. Parents: Harold and Alma Zehr (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 1 at Mennonite Church of Normal.

classifieds

- **Pine Lake Fellowship Camp**, Meridian, Miss., seeks ***leadership in camping ministry***. Positions include administrator, maintenance, summer programming.
  Contact Cheryl Landis, 601-693-9985; <jclandis3@juno.com>.

- **Springdale Mennonite Church**, Waynesboro, Va., is seeking a half-time ***associate pastor in youth ministry***. Prefer experience, although training is available.
  Call 540-949-8945 or send resume to Springdale Mennonite Church, 170 Hall School Rd., Waynesboro, VA 22980; email <sprngdle@intelos.net>.

- **MENNO Project** seeks 10 people to participate in a two-week ***work camp at Cachipay (Colombia) Retreat Center***, Feb. 2-16, 2002. Carpentry, construction, plumbing, sewing, painting and cleaning skills a plus. Sponsored by Commission on Overseas Mission.
  Contact Karen McCabe-Juhnke, 316-283-5100; <KarenMJ@gcmc.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***constituent relations coordinator*** to create and maintain communications patterns between EMM and church leaders/members. Full-time position begins February 2002. Mission experience and familiarity with Lancaster Mennonite Conference required.
  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline Oct. 19.

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- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***representative to Middle East/West Asia*** to strategize and implement new mission initiatives and to supervise long-term workers. Part-time (20-40%) position begins January 2002. Middle East/Muslim cross-cultural mission experience preferred.

  Contact Darrel Hostetter at 717-898-2251 or <darrelh@emm.org>. Application deadline Nov. 16.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***accountant*** to provide financial services for its long-term international programs. Part-time position (80%) begins Nov. 19, 2001. Responsibilities include reviewing financial reports, initiating correspondence with overseas offices, arranging payments and assisting in budget development. Requirements: commitment to missions, ability to handle details well, and training and/or experience in accounts payable, accounts receivable and MS Excel.

  Contact Jeanette Hess at <jeanetteh@emm.org> or 717-898-2251 by Oct. 15.

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, is urgently seeking a ***qualified accountant (CPA level)*** to fill a staff vacancy. This position begins Jan. 7, 2002. Rosslyn is a joint effort of Mennonite, Southern Baptist and Assemblies of God missions in eastern Africa, yet the school is nondenominational in faith and practice. Rosslyn serves over 440 students K-12, and it is fully accredited with MSA and ACSI.

  Email Dena Brent, Superintendent, <DenaB@rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke> or airmail to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** has ***RN opportunities*** in our health-care center serving seniors. Enjoy a compassionate, pleasant, family-oriented environment in a rural setting of Lancaster County, Pa. Good pay and excellent benefits. Assistance with moving expenses available. Hours include full-time 3-11 or 11-7 for supervisory or charge nurse positions. Landis Homes is a ministry committed to providing quality programs for the enrichment of senior adults in an environment of Christian love.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; call 717-581-3936 or visit our web site at <www.landishomes.org>.

- **Choice Books of West Coast**, a new California inter-Mennonite corporation, is accepting applications for an immediate opening of a full-time ***administrator***. Duties: to provide visionary leadership in building a strong distributor organization to market Choice Books to general market retailers throughout state of California, and to administer daily activities of the organization. Qualifications: Prefer college or seminary degree and business experience, fiscal/budget and people management skills and computer proficiency. Shall be a member of an Anabaptist church with ability to relate to broad Anabaptist constituency. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience.

  Send resume or contact Jim Gaede, Chair, 603 N. Birch Ave., Reedley, CA 93654; 559-638-2455; email <jmgaede@psnw.com>.

- **Community Caring Inc.** seeks ***chief executive officer***. CEO needed for progressive rural retirement community in Michigan. Community Caring Inc. of Fairview, Mich., seeks as its first CEO someone with a sense of mission, faith, vision and strong development and team-building skills. Must have at least 5 yrs. administrative/leadership experience and a bachelor's degree. Prefer some graduate level work and that experience/education be related to health care, business or older adult housing and services. CCI is located in beautiful, northeast rural Michigan and has 60 nursing beds, including a dementia unit, and 76 independent living units. We are expanding into assisted living as well.

  For information or to submit a resume, contact Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-9689; fax 219-534-3254; email <tim@mhsonline.org>.

- **Frederick Mennonite Community** seeks a ***director of operations*** to provide leadership in the daily operation of this CCRC community. The community consists of a 62-bed Medicaid/Medicare and JCAHO accredited health-care center along with a memory loss support unit, assisted living units and independent apartments and cottages. Located 45 minutes northeast of Philadelphia in scenic northwest Montgomery County, Frederick Mennonite provides a full continuum of services to over 275 residents. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in a local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, PA nursing home administrator's license, 6 years senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills.

  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <kirkstiffney@aol.com>.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community** seeks an experienced executive leader for a ***vice president level position***. This individual will lead and integrate the development and implementation of VMRC's fund-raising, marketing, communication and public relations operations. Successful candidates must meet the following requirements: master's degree related to one or more professional areas of responsibility, preferably marketing and communication. Minimum five years of professional executive management experience in one or more areas of responsibility, preferably marketing and fund raising in the long-term care industry. Visionary with strong leadership and strategic planning skills.

  Send resume and cover letter to Director of Human Resources, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2452; fax 540-564-3700; email <hr@vmrc.org>; web <www.vmrc.org>.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***professor of economics***. Teaching responsibilities are in the areas of general economics, international economics and business, money and the economy. Position, full-time with a view to tenure, is available at junior and senior levels; salary and rank commensurate with qualifications and experience. The Ph.D. degree in economics is strongly preferred (outstanding A.B.D.s will be considered). Candidates must demonstrate a strong commitment to excellence in teaching and liberal arts education; candidate must also be committed to supporting strong professional business programs in the department. Successful collegiate teaching experience and knowledge of and facility with appropriate instructional technologies are strongly preferred. The successful candidate will be expected to work collaboratively with students and faculty. Responsibilities begin August 2002. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are also expected to share a commitment to this mission. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

  Please send a letter of application, resume and three professional or business references to Anita Stalter, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <Dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.Goshen.edu> under "employment." Interviews will begin on Oct. 22, 2001, and continue until the position is successfully filled.

- **Gould Farm** seeks an ***executive director***. Gould Farm is a unique rehabilitation community for individuals being treated for mental illness, where individuals with mental illness learn to build more meaningful lives for themselves. Since 1913, Gould Farm has been grounded in values of service and fellowship, and the community's nonsectarian spiritual underpinnings remain a key component of the program. Located on a 600-acre working farm in western Massachusetts and at four transitional living sites near Boston, Gould Farm's programs accommodate 85 guests. Most of the 50 staff live and work on site. The annual budget is $2 million. Gould Farm seeks a seasoned, open-minded leader with excellent communication skills and at least 5 years experience as a CEO or administrator of a nonprofit organization of similar size. The CEO must manage diversified business, fund-raising and program activities while providing vision and guidance to work with the therapeutic, spiritual and family aspects of community life. The applicant must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a related field; a master's degree or doctorate degree is preferred. Candidates may come from a variety of backgrounds (e.g. mental health, social work, divinity or education). Experience with direct service is preferred. Compensation includes a competitive salary with comprehensive and unusual benefits, including private residence provided on site in the Berkshire Hills. For more information about Gould Farm and the executive director position, please contact the Gould Farm web site, <www.gouldfarm.org>. The executive committee of the Gould Farm board of directors is leading the search. Please do not contact Gould Farm directly.

  Please send a cover letter with your expectations, salary history and resume to Gould Farm Search Committee, P.O. Box 106, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

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by Rich Preheim

Commission still unfulfilled

By crunching a lot of numbers, *Faith Today* shows that it is not likely that the entire world will be reached for Christ in the foreseeable future, despite some claims to the contrary.

Of the 6.1 billion people on the planet, about a third are Christian, a third are non-Christians but have been exposed to the gospel, and another third of the people have never been reached. Some 425,000 workers from 4,100 foreign agencies are now on the mission field.

But more than 70 percent of Christian efforts are directed at people who already profess to be Christians, while less than 5 percent of mission work focuses on those who have never had a chance to hear the good news.

Researchers say 1,739 primary cultural/language groups are still unreached, and some 380 million people don't have a Bible in their own language.

Even the agencies themselves disagree on how much work is left. Wycliffe Bible Translators say they have made New Testaments available in more than 500 of the world's 6,809 languages. But another study says there are 12,000 ethno-linguistic groups. And yet another claims there are 24,000 distinct ethnic—but not necessarily language—groups that must be reached in order to fulfill the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations.

Still, there are reasons for hope: A century ago, there was one mission worker for every 27,240 people; now the ratio is one for every 15,250 people. Christian radio programming covers 99 percent of the globe. And the *Jesus* film has been seen by 4 billion people and heard via radio or audiocassette by 260 million more.

Cure for insomnia?

And you thought your pastor was long-winded. An Anglican preacher in England this summer set a world record for the longest sermon at 28 hours, 45 minutes, breaking the previous record of 27 hours, 30 minutes.

Christopher Sterry, the vicar of Whalley in Lancashire, started preaching at 6:30 a.m. on June 29 and didn't quit until 12:08 p.m. the next day, taking a 15 minute break every eight hours. By the end, his efforts were being broadcast frequently on CNN, reports *The Christian Century.*

While setting the record, Sherry also eclipsed a monetary goal. He had wanted to raise 2,000 pounds ($2,800) for church funds as well as raising awareness for Anglican parishioners to suport their clergy. About 2,000 pounds was collected in donations put into buckets in the church during his marathon sermon, and more money was expected from pledges by sponsors. Further, a bookmaker who took bets on Sterry's outcome has promised to donate all the losing bets. A spokesperson estimates the parish raised at least 5,000 pounds ($7,000).

Praise God and pass the ammunition

John Michael Snyder, an ex-Jesuit and former lobbyist for the National Rifle Association, has been shooting his mouth off, crusading for the appointment of a patron saint of gun owners. According to *U.S. Catholic,* Snyder has been lobbying the Vatican for several years to declare Gabriel Possenti, a relatively obscure 19th-century Italian saint, as the "guardian saint of marksmen." Possenti is said to have saved a town from a band of marauders with a display of marksmanship.

Snyder said Possenti's appointment would show that the Vatican is "courageous enough to stick its neck out for the right of individuals to defend themselves against evil and tyranny." The Vatican press office, meanwhile, has said that naming a gun-toting patron saint was not opportune.

Faithful workers

After all that overtime at the office, wouldn't it be nice to sleep in on Sunday morning? Despite that temptation, employees who put in some of the longest hours at work are also some of the most faithful attenders of worship services. Sixty-two percent of men and 59 percent of women who work 40 to 50 hours a week also go to worship at least monthly, discovered a study cited in *Family Ministry.* The most regular churchgoing men are those who work 40 hours a week; 64 percent attend services at least monthly. The top figure for women is 63 percent for part-time employees.

Generation to generation

The impression of Central and South America as a bastion of Roman Catholicism is slowly being revised, reports the Church of the Brethren's *Messenger.* Over the course of three generations, Latin Americans have gone from 74 percent Catholic and 18 percent Protestant to 59 percent Catholic and 32 percent Protestant. In the Dominican Republic, for example, the percentage of Protestants has jumped from 3 percent to 10 percent over the last 15 years.

Tidbits

- **The audience most interested in secular media coverage of religion is readers and viewers age 70 and older.—*Columbia Journalism Review***
- **Bible translator William Tyndale was burned at the stake in 1536 for translating "ekklesia" as "congregation" rather than "church" and "presbyteros" as "elder" rather than "priest."—*Context***
- **The largest number of new members in a Church of the Nazarene congregation in one year was 2,350 in Bogotá, Colombia. —*Holiness Today***
- **John Wesley preached more than 40,000 times during his lifetime.—*The Wesleyan Advocate***
- **Fewer than 10 percent of "good" Christians say they have to agree with all teachings of their church. —*ChristianWeek***

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Rich Preheim

A chance to save our eyesight

I never cease to wonder at the cruelty of this land / but it seems a time of sadness is a time to understand.—from “Lord Is it Mine” by Supertramp

It may be coincidental, providential or simply ironic, but the timing of two recent events is difficult to ignore. Just weeks before the terrible terrorist attack of Sept. 11, a landmark history book arrived that demonstrates that this country’s leaders, instead of mobilizing for a self-proclaimed “war” against an unknown enemy, need to prepare a campaign for peace if they want a successful resolution to hostilities.

Called *The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History* and released by Anabaptist publisher Pandora Press, the book was written by history professors Jim Juhnke of Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and Carol Hunter of Quaker-affiliated Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.

Despite its popularity, violence has proven to be an utter failure in resolving conflict.

When they developed the idea of the book in the mid-1990s, they couldn’t have known about hijacked planes crashing into the World Trade Center and Pentagon. But Juhnke and Hunter knew what the rest of us need to know, especially now: violence begets violence, and nonviolence is the only solution to the world’s ills, a lesson not found in conventional accounts of history.

Consider most textbooks’ commemorations of wars and warriors, teaching us that brute force is an acceptable way—indeed often the only way—to address disputes. Who is not acquainted with George Washington, John Hancock, Betsy Ross and others in the fight against Britain’s alleged tyranny and oppression?

But how many people have heard of Joseph Galloway? A Pennsylvania Quaker, according to *The Missing Peace,* in 1774 he proposed the creation of an American house of British parliament with representation from the 13 colonies and a presiding officer appointed by the throne. The plan could have staved off violent upheaval while accommodating colonial concerns. But after two days of debate, the Continental Congress defeated Galloway’s plan by one vote.

That action helped set the stage not just for the American Revolution but for two centuries of wars and battles as the United States has been seduced by the illogical promise of peace through violence.

“We believe a new historical self-understanding is essential,” write Juhnke and Hunter, whose book also addresses Native Americans, slavery, World War II and the Cold War, among other topics. “In our time hope must find its inspiration in a new vision which transcends national boundaries and generates the capacity to resolve conflicts nonviolently both within and among the nations.”

Such beliefs are rooted in the teachings and life of Christ, who told his followers to not seek revenge but to love and bless those who wrong them. But this isn’t just pie-in-the-sky idealism. One of the beautiful aspects of Christianity is that while it is often difficult to practice, it is also eminently practical. Our violent acts only perpetuate themselves in a cycle of revenge and retribution, creating more deaths, more destruction, more suffering.

Yet despite its popularity, violence has proven to be an utter failure in resolving conflict. For centuries humans have employed a variety of tactics—verbal assaults, fisticuffs, gunfights, terrorist attacks, warfare—and still our conflicts remain and even intensify.

Nowhere is that truer than with the tragedies of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and Somerset County, Pa. The attacks cannot be condemned strongly enough. But they did not happen in a vacuum. There can be little doubt that the Sept. 11 violence was fueled by a history of violence by the United States: the Gulf War, the subsequent decade of the embargo and bombing of Iraq, the oppression of Palestinians by U.S.-supported Israel, our country’s historic role in Iran’s affairs. Now the United States is preparing to unleash its military fury in response to the terrorist attacks without even considering peaceful alternatives.

An eye for an eye for yet another eye, and soon we are all blind. And in our blindness we again prove philosopher George Santayana right: “Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

Fortunately, as Juhnke and Hunter show us, we still have a chance to save our eyesight if we would but learn from history.—*rp*

the Mennonite

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Making headlines

I was troubled and saddened to read the headline "Muslims Oust Mennonites, Partner Agency" in the Sept. 18 issue. At a time when Muslims in our country are being attacked, stereotyped and scapegoated following the horrific events of Sept. 11, I would have expected the writers and editors of our church agencies and publications to exercise more sensitivity. In the Mennonite Central Committee statement concerning the recent tragedy, we encourage churches to "reach out to those within their communities who might become innocent scapegoats and the object of anger and retribution."

International Assistance Mission, including four Mennonites, was expelled from Afghanistan by the ruling Taliban, not by Muslims in general. In fact, many Muslim friends in Iran and South Asia argue that the harsh religion of the Taliban is not truly Islam. The headline suggests Muslims in general are against Mennonites.

I ask that our publications consider more carefully the headlines that are used and how they may contribute to ongoing stereotyping of our Muslim friends and partners.—*Ed Martin, Central and Southern Asia program director, Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa.*

Editor's note: Neither "Afghanistan" nor "Taliban" were used in the story's headline at the request of International Assistance Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, which cited security concerns. We regret the headline's implications.

After the attack

I appreciate the sentiments in Everett Thomas' Sept. 18 editorial ("What Awakens in Us?") but have a factual concern: I was in Hebron, West Bank, on Sept. 11 with Christian Peacemaker Teams and recall that the Israeli papers reported a couple dozen young people—not thousands—in East Jerusalem celebrating the catastrophes in New York and Washington. Not having had a television, I can't speak to what people saw happening in Nablus.

On Sept. 11 and the days following, we were flooded with sympathy calls from Palestinian friends. Strangers approached us on the street because they knew we were Americans and expressed condolences. In the many discussions we had with Palestinians that week, our sense was that the vast majority of Palestinians were appalled by the terrorist attacks. Not one Palestinian to whom we spoke expressed approval regarding the attacks.

It's easy to show footage of hundreds of Palestinians celebrating. It's hard to show footage of 2 million Palestinians grieved and horrified by what they are watching on television.—*Kathleen Kern, Webster, N.Y.*

Everywhere in Chicago, people are hanging signs with the words, "God bless America." Yes, God, please bless America. Bless us with the balm to heal our terrible wounds. Bless us with the wisdom and clearheadedness needed in this dark hour. Bless us with the moral strength to resist racist bigotry. And bless us with the courage to search our nation's soul and to ask, "Why do some in this world hate us so much?" May God help us to realize, as Martin Luther King Jr. once said, that all of us in this world "are tied together in a single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality."—*Todd Friesen, Lombard, Ill.*

We are shocked and horrified over the events of Sept. 11 that left more than 5,000 innocent people dead. Should we not be equally horrified over the economic policies of our government that result in the deaths of 5,000 to 6,000 innocent Iraqi children every month?—*Maxlyn Schmidt, Pawnee Rock, Kan.*

On abortion

I have looked forward to *The Mennonite* supporting the church's teaching position on abortion. The Sept. 11 issue was a disappointment. There was a well-written story about the battle over abortion in Wichita, Kan., ("Caught Between Two Sides") and an editorial ("Killing Them Softly") more concerned about keeping the peace (let's not hurt each other) than peacemaking (preserving the lives of those being knit together in their mothers' wombs [Psalm 139]). Neither piece provided biblical thinking about abortion. With regard to the church's teaching position on abortion, are we really "killing each other softly"? From our leaders and publications, the silence is more often deafening.—*Nathan D. Showalter, Mount Joy, Pa.*

To print "Caught Between Two Sides" by one who openly admits she did not want to be associated with the pro-life organization and who sold herself to the radical pro-abortion group National Organization for Women for money and the possibility of career advancement is akin to *The Mennonite* printing an article on an anti-war demonstration by a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who states

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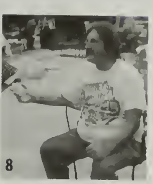
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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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that he thinks some wars might be wrong under certain conditions. The duplicity of this article does a disservice to all the women, especially those in our church, who have been violated by abortion and need healing. The abortionist in her town does not need that kind of support. The infants who continue to be murdered daily do need a voice, a clear, loud one.

We Mennonites passed a resolution at this year's convention in Nashville, Tenn., claiming that we hold all life as valuable, soundly condemning capital punishment without any apologies for not being open to all opinions on the issue. What makes it so difficult for us to do the same for the killing of infants by abortion? *—David H. Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

In "Caught Between Two Sides," Ann Minter Fetters says it is wrong for Christians to picket other Christians. Logically, she should therefore object to demonstrations for civil rights, peace, equality and gun control and to demonstrations against the death penalty, since Christians differ on all these issues.

Fetters also says she supports abortion to preserve the health of the mother. However, the pregnant woman and the unborn child are both human beings created in God's image. Why is killing an unborn baby to preserve the health of the mother any more acceptable than killing the mother to preserve the life of the baby?

It amazes me that *The Mennonite* would publish a feature article advocating killing people under certain circumstances. I feel fairly certain that you would not print an article advocating executing criminals or waging war under certain circumstances. So what is the basis of your flexibility toward articles that advocate killing unborn babies to preserve other people's health?*—Jerry C. Stananway, Lombard, Ill.*

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by Image Productions

God's reign is present

Opportunities facing the church at the edge of history

by Loren L. Johns

Mennonite churches are diverse. While some consider themselves beyond the problem of eschatology and weird speculations, they are not sure what sort of theology should replace it. Meanwhile, premodernists, modernists and postmodernists are all reading Revelation at the same time in the same room. Talk about a challenge.

I see five distinct opportunities facing the church at the beginning of the third millennium. These are the opportunities to study Revelation, provide hope, warn, communicate and edify.

The opportunity to study Revelation: Many readers assume that Revelation is about the future. It is not—at least in the narrow sense. It is about how the future creates a new and different present, about who God is and how God has won and is winning the victory over evil through the death of Jesus.

We tend to ask our own questions of Revelation. This is understandable and legitimate to a point. The problem is that in imposing our own questions on the book we unintentionally resist what the text can do to us as readers. When we begin with our questions, we impose our own frameworks of understanding on the text. And this book, more than any other, needs the freedom to work the other way, to create an alternative universe in our understanding and in our spirit.

When the original audience of Revelation looked out their windows and thought they saw reality, they were mistaken. It may have seemed the power of the Roman Empire was absolute and complete and could not be opposed, but things were not as they seemed. Rome would soon be overthrown in a day.

When readers submit to its evocative power, the book undermines worldviews organized around "might makes right" and re-forms a worldview with God firmly on the throne, with history securely in God's hand and with the slaughtered Lamb as the key to the unveiling of what is really going on in the world.

The opportunity to provide hope: The ministry of hope takes many forms, one being, simply, presence. Hope thrives on a vision of rectifying history, when wrongs will be righted and evildoers judged. God will bring sorrow, death and pain to a merciful end. With such a hope, suffering is difficult, troubling, unsolved but survivable; without such a hope, suffering becomes just a bad joke.

John describes the consummation as a time when God's home will be among mortals. "[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:3-4).

Such a vision can seem escapist. When life is unbearable and the future is unthinkable, it is tempting to check out of this world and wait for the next. The integrity of hope needs an ethical reality check. When future hope provides the spiritual vision to turn with renewed drive to current challenges and engage socially and spiritually in the current world, then such hope is legitimate and from God.

The opportunity to warn: Eschatology is not just a branch of theology that is particularly interesting at times like ours; it is a view of the future that embodies and reveals its theological foundations. The eschatology of some prophecy writers depends upon a Christology and an ethical vision that are dangerous.

Prophecy writers pay little attention to the Gospels or to the character of Jesus they portray. While there may be room for a Son of Man riding on the clouds in judgment, there is little room for one who suffers, or one who esteems the role of servanthood, or one who gives his life for others. In other words, there is little room for the cross.

The lamb is the central symbol for Christ in Revelation. Prophecy writers seldom know what to do with this image. They are drawn more naturally to the image of the lion, which occurs just once in the book as a symbol for Christ (5:5). The juxtaposition of lion and lamb in Revelation 5 is not sustained. The lion disappears from view, never to be seen again.

But many writers reject Christ as Lamb in favor of Christ as Lion. Hal Lindsey says: "When Jesus came to earth the first time, he came in humility to offer himself as the Lamb of God to die for the sins of men. But when he comes again he'll return in the strength and supremacy of a lion." But that is not what Revelation says. Such an emphasis is essentially a rejection of Revelation's teaching about Christ and of its ethical vision.

The popularity of the Y2K phenomenon was

Behind some prophecy writings lies a thinly veiled glee about the suffering evildoers will undergo when Christ returns. True believers will finally have their day in the sun. … Such a vision is dangerous.

In worship we confess Who is on the throne, we challenge false allegiances, we reaffirm our commitments, we repent of our failures to live as if God's reign were already present.

great. Some churches offered seminars and teachings on how to prepare for the coming disaster. Web sites multiplied. One religious web site boasted hundreds of links to other sites devoted to the Y2K problem.

In one such site, Karen Anderson offered practical advice for Christian women survivalists, such as how to store food and water, how to survive without electricity, how to learn to fight like a man so that a woman can defend her home and family against intruders, and how to procure and learn to use guns to protect one's family. Jesus would be ashamed.

Behind some prophecy writings lies a thinly veiled glee about the suffering evildoers will undergo when Christ returns. True believers will finally have their day in the sun. After centuries of suffering and denying themselves, Christians will finally throw off their crosses and ride into the kingdom on the cape of a powerful messiah. Such a vision is dangerous.

Much of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God came in the form of warnings about the idolatry of survivalism. We humans have neither the capacity nor the responsibility to secure our own future—at least in the sense of physical survival or economic prosperity. Such security lies solely in the hands of God. Christians today can avoid the temptation of survivalism by drawing attention to the issue and by naming the dangers of self-importance, self-interest and survivalism.

The opportunity to communicate: Paradigms of understanding are not easily formed or changed. While the challenge of effective communication is great, so are the opportunities.

1. Begin where the conversation partner is. Listen. Look for the pastoral issues behind the theological issues. Responding to pains, hopes and fears may free the other to hear what she or he could not have heard otherwise.

2. Be aware of the theologies behind the debates. While disputes about "pretrib," "midtrib," "post-trib," "premill," "postmill" and "amill" options may not themselves be that important, the theologies and ethical visions implied by those eschatologies are.

3. Do not underestimate the power of historical description for changing paradigms of understanding. People see things differently when they understand the stories behind the theologies. Further, historical description itself is an exercise in paradigm formation.

4. Maintain perspective. Learn when and where to press the issues and when simply to let them go.

5. Build and maintain relationships. Without trust, few views will change, regardless of how brilliant the arguments.

6. Maintain a sense of humor and humility. A curse of eschatological debates historically is that people have taken themselves far too seriously.

7. Worship. Worship is a powerful tool for shaping paradigms of understanding. In worship we confess Who is on the throne, we challenge false allegiances, we reaffirm our commitments, we repent of our failures to live as if God's reign were already present, and we ask again in prayer for God's kingdom to come, for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The opportunity to edify: There is no higher calling than to build up the church. I am not referring to the ministry of comfort and encouragement or even effective administration, important as these are. Rather I am referring to the ministry of calling and enabling the church be the visible, active body of Christ in the world.

The reign of God is already breaking in on human experience, but it has not yet been fully realized. Christian discipleship is a matter of living in the already-but-not-yet of God's reign. The revelation of God's triumph through Christ enables the sort of sacrificial living and nonviolent resistance to evil that can transform the world.

Mark's summary of Jesus' preaching as he began his career speaks well to the church in our time: "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:14-15).

We might paraphrase it thus: "Time's up. God's reign is present. Get your life out of tune with that old 'realism' and invest in this new reign of God that is just now being realized." We would do well to live as if we believed this message as we live in the new millennium.

Loren L. Johns is dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

The revelation of God's triumph through Christ enables the sort of sacrificial living and nonviolent resistance to evil that can transform the world.

Stones and tears

Facing the overwhelming pain and anxiety from death and injustice in Colombia

by Janna L. Bowman

Here in Colombia, the pain and anxiety stemming from all the injustice and death are more than we know how to handle. (I say we, but as a North American service worker, I have only just entered this world.) We hope we're not all terribly misguided and have faith that our efforts for life are worthwhile.

Colombian peace workers plunge ahead with commitment and "animo" (encouragement, high-spiritedness), despite spirals of violence that make this work appear ludicrous to an outside observer. Peter Stucky, president of the Colombian Mennonite Church, once said there come times when all the pebbles of sadness, pain, violence and injustice accumulated over the days, weeks and years become too heavy for a human heart to bear.

I agree. We are not even aware of everything we carry inside. The story of the massacred village, fear for safety, the widow's need, my co-worker's dysfunctional family, a child's hunger, my country's greed—all these things are pebbles we gather from living here and listening to Colombia's life song.

When we accumulate enough stones, the heaviness of sorrow and uncertainty finds outlet in tears. People are not as ashamed of crying here as they are in the United States. With such weight to bear, it seems critical to Colombia's health to allow for the cathartic release of emotion, the unburdening of pebbles through the release of tears.

I was a little surprised when Peter wept during a conversation in his office earlier this summer. But tears no longer catch me off guard. During the last team meeting, the Justapaz community sat with our director, Ricardo Esquivia, as he struggled to share his fear for personal safety and his recent painful experiences. Words failed him. Quiet tears slipped from his eyes and streamed through his untrimmed beard. The community waited in silence, adding their tears to his and all the others shed for Colombia that day.

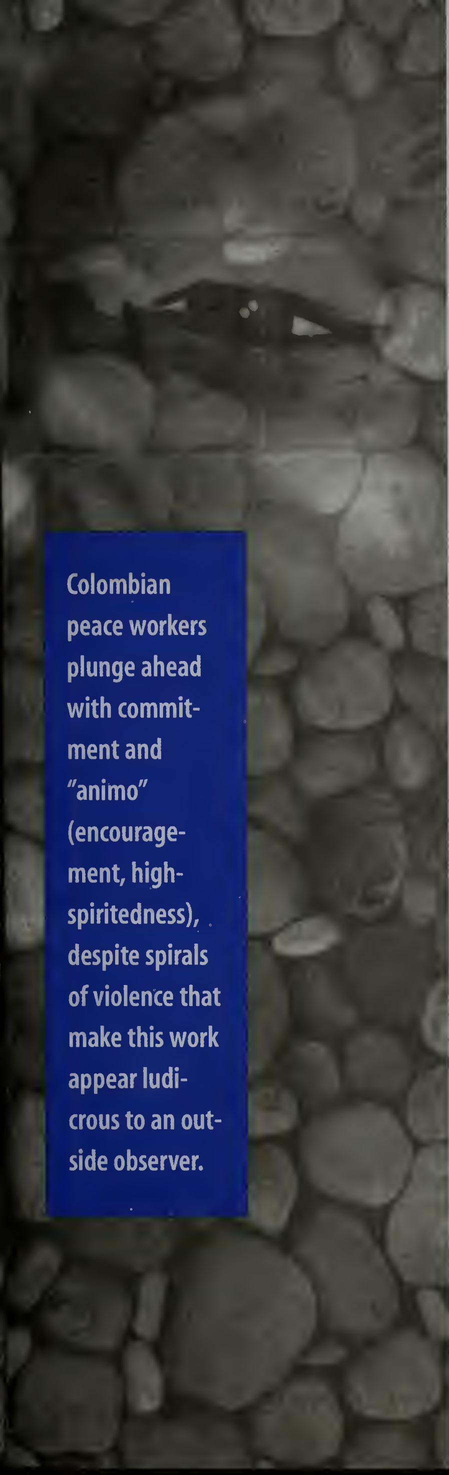
I have only cried once here. Sometimes tears won't come, as happened one Friday.

Rumors are vicious creatures in Colombia; they often involve death. One Friday morning I heard a rumor that other participants in a march in mid-June by about 1,000 indigenous people from various parts of Colombia were responsible for killing two of the marchers. (The march, in which I participated, was held in Tierralta, Córdoba, Colombia, in response to the kidnapping of Kimy Pernía Domicó, an indigenous leader.) This rumor was ridiculous. If anyone had been assassinated it would have been orchestrated by the ultra-right-wing paramilitary forces and would not have been perpetrated by anyone within the commission.

I was upset and could not find any sources even commenting on the situation. Images flooded my mind, images of my new friends, anger with carelessness for life and justice, the setback in peace movements, thoughts of the horrible implications for the march and reputation of the people if this accusation continued. I wanted to cry but could not. Neither could I concentrate on work. All I had was my breath, so I traced my breathing. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in calm, breathe out release. Breathe in calm, breathe out fear. My breath became my prayer. My breath is my life.

O God, what's next? What should I do? We have our tears and we have our breath. If nothing else, these help us in everyday healing, in releasing stones, in laying a path on our continuing journey toward life.

Janna L. Bowman works through Mennonite Central Committee for Justapaz, Christian Center for Justice, Peace and Nonviolent Action, is an agency of the Colombian Mennonite Church. She is a member of Bally (Pa.) Mennonite Church.



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Q&A with Mennonite Church USA leaders

Executive director Jim Schrag (left) and moderator Ervin Stutzman answer questions for our readers. You may send questions for this feature to themennnonite@mph.org, or call 1-800-790-2498.

Q **What percentage of current General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) congregations in the United States do you think will join Mennonite Church USA? How many do you expect to lose?**

A It's hard to predict, although 95 percent of GC and MC delegates voted to approve the merger. We are aware that perhaps 2 percent of the combined U.S. membership has already left area conference membership. Will another 3 percent follow, by this indicator? In previous conventions in which joint integration exploration or implementation votes were taken (Bethelehem 83, Normal 89, St. Louis 99), approximately 10 percent of the delegates did not approve. Again, at Nashville 2001, 10 percent of the delegates did not favor the membership guidelines. In the end, the grass roots will vote with their hearts, their hands, their feet and their pocketbooks. We regret that the whole church has not been able to stay together. But we remind ourselves that the kingdom of God does not begin or end with Mennonite Church USA. So rather than speculate too long about how many churches might leave, we will do our best to help Mennonite Church USA become a church that followers of Jesus Christ will be pleased to join.

Q **Is there anything you wish you had done differently at the convention in Nashville?**

A We are grateful for the work of the Spirit that granted "far more than we could ask or imagine" at Nashville. All the surprises were good ones. However, we wish we could have found a less expensive way to gather youth and adults under one roof, along with a more truly multicultural representation of the body of Christ. And we wish that we could have called forth resolutions from the delegate body (such as the suggested one on abortion) rather than bringing only statements from official committees.

Homeless are attack's invisible victims

Manhattan Mennonite helping others process trauma

NEW YORK—Clarke Bell works in the heart of the financial district in lower Manhattan. His office is a block and a half from the New York Stock Exchange. But his job has nothing to do with keeping the wheels of capitalism turning.

Bell, a deacon at Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, works at the John Heuss House, a 24-hour drop-in center for the chronically homeless mentally ill and medically frail. While thousands fled the area following the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Bell's clients stayed behind. Accustomed to fear, many homeless saw little point in running and instead congregated around the abandoned hot dog and coffee stands.

One of Bell's clients witnessed people jumping to their deaths from the upper floors of the World Trade Center. He heard their screams and remembers them holding hands as they fell. Another client, traumatized by the event, was missing for 12 days before he wandered back wearing clothes still covered in dust from the collapsed towers.

Many homeless, who have long been invisible to the world around them, have slipped through the cracks of post-attack security and have since remained where they feel most at home: in the streets surrounding the World Trade Center.

"The homeless are resilient people," Bell says. "They are persistent."

Following the tragedy, Bell worked four consecutive eight-hour shifts to help keep the John Heuss House open and offer support for the homeless who witnessed the unimaginable. Bell listened to their stories of horror.

One client said he felt as if someone was chasing him. Another was worried about the daughters and sons of those who died. Yet another believes that those who attacked the World Trade Center should be taken to a high place and thrown out so others can hear them scream on the way down. Many clients stumbled upon human body parts scattered by the explosion.

"[The John Heuss House staff members] were operating on adrenaline," Bell says. "It wasn't until about a week later that we began talking about our need for support."

MDS photo by Ted Houser

In Battery Park in lower Manhattan, Clarke Bell (left) listens to Rick, a homeless man, talk of his experiences of the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center. Bell, a deacon at Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, works at a Manhattan homeless shelter. Many homeless people in the area have experienced trauma from witnessing the attack and its aftermath.

He was able to find support from Joe Steiner, grief-crisis counselor and coordinator of the Restoring Hope Fund, Mennonite Disaster Service's (MDS) response to the Sept. 11 attack. "It was reassuring to know Joe was there," Bell says.

Steiner is helping him and other New York Mennonites process their grief. "The reactions of these people are normal," says Steiner, a former social work professor at Syracuse (N.Y.) University.

"Eventually, we want to be able to reach out with new vision for the future in the absence of what has been lost," he says.

"We are all grieving. Some have lost family members. The rest of us have lost innocence and the false belief that we were immune to danger."

As the homeless carry on, Bell worries that his mission of getting the homeless off the streets has been set back by this catastrophe. Zoning requirements already prevent the John Heuss House from putting a sign on their building, and Bell predicts that operating a homeless shelter in the financial district is not going to get any easier.

"People generally don't think that this stuff is going on in the heart of capitalism," Bell says.—*Ted Houser of MDS News Service*

MCC responding to Afghan crisis

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) will send food, comforters and maybe volunteers to help an Afghan refugee population that is increasing due to the threat of U.S. military action.

MCC has 616 metric tons of food in Pakistan slated for refugees amassed along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. In addition, MCC is providing $200,000 through the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for the purchase of food, shelter and blankets for refugees along the Afghanistan-Iran border and for people displaced within Afghanistan.

Within the next two weeks, MCC will ship 12,000 comforters to be distributed by the IRCS. MCC is also exploring sending volunteers to Iran to work with the IRCS.

According to the United Nations, more than 5 million Afghans had been displaced by drought and internal strife. Another 1.5 million refugees are expected under the prospect of U.S. military strikes on Afghanistan in retaliation for the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.—*MCC News Service*

Goshen vice president to direct education agency; hiring fills final denominational executive position

BALTIMORE—Carlos Romero, a Goshen (Ind.) College vice president who previously developed denominational youth conventions into spectacular gatherings that attract thousands of participants, has been named executive director of the new Mennonite Church USA Mennonite Education Agency (MEA).

The MEA board appointed Romero Sept. 29 while meeting in Baltimore. The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board has also approved him. Vice president for student life and dean of students at Goshen since 1999, he will begin his new position next summer, after completing Goshen's academic year.

"I am humbled by the call to help in the development of a new partnership between our educational institutions and the church," says Romero. "An important [question] is, What does it mean for our educational institutions to serve as missional agents in Mennonite Church USA?"

MEA will oversee denominational school-based education, from kindergarten through seminary.

"Carlos has shown himself to be an astute administrator, a pathfinder with an entrepreneurial spirit who will bring a broadening approach to [Mennonite Church USA-affiliated] schools," says Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director.

Romero, a native of Puerto Rico, began his career working with youth and young adults in 1985, when he became business manager and administrator of the two Puerto Rican Mennonite schools. In 1990, he moved to Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) as the Mennonite Church's minister of youth for nine years before going to Goshen College.

While at MBCM, Romero directed the denominational youth conventions, which grew in attendance from 1,800 to more than 6,500.

"Carlos is highly respected and much loved by the youth and by all people of color, because he has affirmed that there is a place for us in the Mennonite church," says Nancy Rodriguez Lora, a Mennonite Church USA Executive Board member and former MBCM board member.

MEA is scheduled to start Feb. 1, 2002, succeeding the Mennonite Church's Mennonite Board of Education and the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council. A transition plan is being developed for staffing MEA until Romero will be able to begin as executive director.

Romero's appointment fills the final top executive position of the four denominational program agencies. Earlier this year, Stanley Green was named president of Mennonite Mission Network and Dennis Good acting president and publisher of Mennonite Publishing House Inc. Howard Brenneman continues as president of Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Also complete is the roster of Executive Board leadership, including the directors of the six Executive Board offices: Schrag, executive director; Ron Byler, associate executive director; Ted Stuckey, director of the office of administration and finance; Cindy Snider, director of the office of communications; Marlene Kropf, director of the office of congregational life; Jorge Vallejos, director of the office of convention planning; Kenyetta Aduma, director of the office of cross-cultural relations; and Keith Harder and Dale Stoltzfus, co-directors of the office of ministerial leadership.

What does it mean for our educational institutions to serve as missional agents in Mennonite Church USA?

—Carlos Romero

Mary Klassen

At stake

Students, faculty and staff at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary pound stakes into the lawn of their Elkhart, Ind., campus on Sept. 25 to symbolize their mourning of the terrorist attack two weeks earlier. About 100 people planted 6,800 stakes—one for each person killed—in the shape of a cross. A worship service was also held.

College, seminary numbers decrease 1.5 percent as four of seven schools report enrollment losses

After two years of growth, denominational college and seminary enrollment slipped 1.5 percent to start the 2001-2002 academic year. Only three of the seven schools showed increases in their student numbers over last fall.

Total fall enrollment is 4,620, down from 4,688 for the fall 2000 semester.

For the second year in a row, Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., reported the greatest gain of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church schools. Bethel has 525 students, up 3.8 percent from last year, thanks to a 6 percent increase in full-time students and an 82.1 percent retention rate.

Also up this year are Hesston (Kan.) College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. The Hesston student body numbers 445, a gain of 10 students from last year, while AMBS has 188 students, a gain of four. But more AMBS students are taking lighter loads, as the number of full-time students dropped from 79 to 56. AMBS enrollment includes 22 students participating in the school's Conference-Based Education program, which offers courses for AMBS credit in regional areas.

The greatest loss in enrollment came at Goshen (Ind.) College, where the size of the student body fell from 1,041 to 984, a difference of 5.6 percent. Fall enrollment at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., is 115, down five from last year.

Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg still has the largest enrollment of the denominational post-secondary schools, despite dropping 30 students, or 2.2 percent from last year. This fall's tally is 1,313 undergraduate and graduate students, excluding the seminary. Bluffton (Ohio) College has the second-largest enrollment with 1,050 undergraduate and graduate students, nine fewer than last year. But the school is enjoying an all-time high of 743 residential students, bolstered by a 9 percent increase in first-year and transfer students.

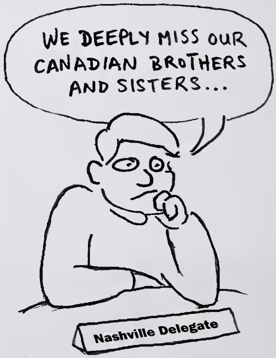
Enrollments: a comparison

	2001	2000
AMBS	188	184
Bethel	525	506
Bluffton	1,050	1,059
EMS	115	120
EMU	1,313	1,343
Goshen	984	1,041
Hesston	445	435
TOTAL	4,620	4,688

David Hiebert

Peacemakers on the move

Walkers trek through Fort Wayne, Ind., Sept. 22 to the office of Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., to present suggestions for nonviolent responses to terrorism and international violence. The walk was organized as part of the sixth Christian Peacemaker Congress, held Sept. 20-23 near North Manchester, Ind. About 130 people registered for the event, sponsored by Christian Peacemaker Teams and New Call to Peacemaking. The congress was held the week after the Sept. 11 terrorism attack in the United States. Speaker Davis Waas, professor emeritus of history at Church of the Brethren-affiliated Manchester College in North Manchester, noted the proliferation of "God Bless America" slogans since the attack. "I don't think that's a plea," he lamented, "that's a command."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After discovering Mennonitism, MBM worker makes long-term commitment to French church

ELKHART, Ind.—The past year has been one of many losses for Linda Oyer. She was by her mother's side when her mother died in June. Oyer also lost a rewarding job as academic dean and professor at the European Bible Institute, as well as a close community of colleagues, when the interdenominational institution in Lamorlaye, France, closed its doors at the end of the school year. Oyer had taught there for 20 years as a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker.

Nevertheless, she is hopeful. Oyer last month began a new MBM assignment, working out of the Paris Mennonite Center in collaboration with French and Swiss Mennonites to develop a master's degree program in Anabaptist theology for French speakers. She also has writing and speaking engagements lined up for years to come.

Perhaps most dear to Oyer's heart is her pastoral ministry in the 4-year-old North Paris Mennonite Church. The group of 50 adults that gathers weekly is the only French-speaking Protestant congregation in the area. During the past year, the congregation has been studying the Bible with youth from a nearby housing project.

"After 20 years of teaching at a Bible school and discussing the fine exegetical points of a biblical text, I have found myself having to simplify the way I communicate with these young people," Oyer says. "This has been very good for me, even though I often struggle to find ways to communicate to those who have no concept of Christianity and whose lives are characterized by violence and drugs."

Though many years of academia stand between Oyer and the drug world, she once moved freely in that milieu. She describes herself as "a victim of a church split." Her parents left the Mennonite Church in the United States when Oyer was a toddler. "I bore the consequences all my life," she says. "I lost so much."

Oyer then grew up in a fundamentalist Bible church that fused God, church and American politics. In her young adult years, she rebelled against this package. In 1970, she traveled to Europe to pick up a drug shipment. France was a hostile place for a young woman with a black fist logo on her army jacket and knee-length moccasins and who didn't speak French.

Lost and dejected, Oyer called missionary friends of her parents who lived in Paris. They welcomed her but had to leave the next day for a mission conference in Switzerland. But they told Oyer that they knew of a place in the Alps where she could stay free of charge.

Though it sounded too good to be true, Oyer accepted immediately. She was dropped off at L'Abri, a Christian community for seekers. When Oyer arrived, the members were gathered for a meeting. "I looked around for someone who I could identify with," she says. "I saw this cute little man with long hair sitting on the floor. When I sat down beside him, he said, 'I like your moccasins.' "

Thus Oyer began conversation with Francis Schaeffer, L'Abri's founder and a theologian and author. By the end of that week, Oyer had decided to become a follower of Christ.

Oyer

When she went back to the United States, she realized she needed to put physical distance between herself and the drug culture. She returned to Paris the next year and worked part-time in an independent Bible church and part-time in a home for unwed mothers.

But Oyer says she felt alone, swimming upstream in the prevailing religious current. In 1987, however, two French Mennonite families joined her congregation, and something clicked for her theologically.

Oyer asked the French Mennonites if there were any Mennonites in the United States and was told that one would be arriving in Paris the following day. He was MBM administrator Wilbert Shenk, now a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

"In talking with Wilbert, I discovered that I wasn't weird," Oyer says. "I found a whole people who believed as I did."

She joined MBM in 1988 and has been with the agency ever since. She earned her doctorate in New Testament from the Catholic Institute of Paris. "I've lived in France since 1971 and am now reaping the benefits," Oyer says.

This spring she was one of the main speakers at a conference for French-speaking Protestant women in church leadership—despite the fact that no Americans were to be involved. The church press lauded Oyer for "touching her listeners' hearts without forgetting their heads."

But regardless of her area of ministry—be it behind a pulpit, in a classroom or on a street corner, Oyer says her ardent desire is "to aid the church in France in being a relevant source of life."—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

Tournament twice as nice for church

For only the third time since the Indiana Mennonite Softball Tournament began in 1978, one congregation has won both the men's and women's titles in the same year.

The tournament, held every Labor Day weekend in Fort Wayne, Ind., is a fundraiser for Mennonite Central Committee.

This year, Mennonite Christian Assembly from Fredericksburg, Ohio, took home both championship trophies. The men's team came out of the loser's bracket to twice defeat First Mennonite Church of Montgomery, Ind. The women went through the tournament undefeated, defeating Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church in the last game.

Other previous double champions were Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., in 1992, and Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio, in 1999.

The 2001 tournament drew 56 men's and 11 women's teams from six states. Profits from the previous 23 tournaments have contributed more than $43,000 to Mennonite Central Committee.

this date in Mennonite history

Oct. 9, 1954—Representatives from the Mennonite Church's Goshen (Ind.) Biblical Seminary and the General Conference Mennonite Church's Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago gather in Chicago for their first meeting to explore joining the two schools, which eventually formed Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

German to direct new exchange program

KARLSRUHE, Germany—Liesa Unger says she enjoys working with youth and young adults. She will have plenty of opportunities as the first director of a new Mennonite World Conference-Mennonite Central Committee exchange program.

Called YAMEN, or Young Anabaptist Mennonite Exchange Network, the program will make possible church-to-church and young adult exchanges. For one year, participants will use their gifts in the congregations that receive them. They will return home to spend three months in their sending congregations.

Unger will now start work on an application, screening and orientation process. She hopes to place five people in YAMEN's first year, 10 the next year and 15 in the third year.

Unger, who was trained as a social worker, had spent the last eight years as director of Christliche Dienst, a German voluntary service organization. From 1990 to 1992, she served with Mennonite Central Committee in Winnipeg's inner city.

Unger was born in Russia and moved to Germany with her family at age 10. She now lives in Karlsruhe with her husband, Wilhelm, who is pastor of Thomashof Mennonite Church.—*MWC and MCC news services*

MEDA president announces plan to retire

WINNIPEG—Ben Sprunger, president of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) since 1994, will retire when his current term ends in March 2003.

During Sprunger's tenure, MEDA launched its Sarona Global Investment Fund—a socially responsible fund dedicated to assisting poor people—and numerous MEDA-like affiliates were developed in the Netherlands, Indonesia, Paraguay and elsewhere. Sprunger is also credited with bolstering the organization's assistance to the poor, visibility in Mennonite circles and support for Christians in business.

"Ben and the other senior leadership of MEDA were able to restructure the organization to make it more effective for our members, partners and, more importantly, the clients we serve throughout the world," says Preston Hofer, a Denver businessman who chaired MEDA's board from 1995 to 1997.

Sprunger, a former Bluffton (Ohio) College president who will turn 65 next summer, says, "I'm incredibly grateful for having the privilege and opportunity to serve with MEDA, and now it's time to give younger people that same privilege and opportunity."

MEDA hopes to have a new president selected by July 2002.—*MEDA News Service*

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Births

Bare, Camille Jane, Aug. 14, to Joe and Laura (Veeneman) Bare, Chicago.

Frye, Nicole Katherine, Sept. 8, to Kerry and Tina (Troyer) Frye, Middlebury, Ind.

Goertzen, Erin Nicole, Aug. 21, to David and Rebecca Voss Goertzen, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Graber, Audrey Charline, Aug. 24, to David and Shari (Bollinger) Graber, White Pigeon, Mich.

Miller, Haley Brooke, Sept. 14, to Matthew and Michelle Miller, Cincinnati.

Nolt, Abigail Elizabeth, Aug. 24, to Julia (Miller) and Richard Nolt, Manheim, Pa.

Peters, James Camden, Sept. 12, to Gordon and Janice (Roth) Peters, Hesston, Kan.

Marriages

Bender/Metzler: Michael Bender, Allensville, Pa., and Reba Metzler, Mill Creek, Pa., Sept. 8 at Allensville Mennonite Church.

Chupp/Stucky: Gary Chupp, Newton, Kan., and Melissa Stucky, Moundridge, Kan., Aug. 11 at Moundridge.

Clemens/Miller: Ashley Clemens, Harleysville, Pa., and Christopher Miller, Harrisonburg, Va., Sept. 14 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Dell'Olio/Rosenberger: Laura Dell'Olio, Wilmington, Del., and Grant Rosenberger, Lancaster, Pa., July 21 at Frick's Historic Mennonite Meetinghouse, Hatsfield, Pa.

Delp/Grieser: Rhonda Delp, Quakertown, Pa., and Michael Grieser, Lansdale, Pa., Sept. 1 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Erb/Landgraf: Rhonda Erb, Goshen, Ind., and John Landgraf, South Bend, Ind., Sept. 15 at Goshen.

Kyle/Miller: Bryan Kyle, Denver, and Sharon Miller, Colorado Springs, Colo., Sept. 15 at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo.

Landis/Rogers: Wendall Landis, Manheim, Pa., and Emily Rogers, Port Matilda, Pa., Sept. 15 at Warriors Mark (Pa.) United Methodist Church.

Musselman/Rowe: Ben Musselman, Harleysville, Pa., and Alison Rowe, England, Aug. 25 at Telford, Pa.

Deaths

Beck, Mary Yedica, 98, Archbold, Ohio, died Sept. 12. Spouse: Oscar Beck (deceased). Parents: Fred and Leah Nofziger Yedica (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, Don, Rollin, Laura Austin, Lois Jackson, Dorothy Miller; 20 grandchildren; many great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Fairlawn Haven Chapel, Archbold.

Byler, Sarah Miller, 82, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Sept. 16. Spouse: Edward Byler (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Fannie Weaver Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Alfred, John, Edward Jr., Janet Miller, Sally Kanagy, Frances Martin, Sandra Ardelian; 20 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Berlin (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Conrad, Mary, 99, Reading, Pa., died Aug. 26. Spouse: Percy Conrad (deceased). Survivors: daughter Leah Mae Freed; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 30 at Gilbertsville, Pa.

Dorsey, William L., 46, Telford, Pa., died Sept. 12. Parents: Thelma Hassinger Coe and Stephen Dorsey Jr. Funeral: Sept. 23 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Drawbond, Amos, 82, Glendale, Ariz., died Sept. 3 of Parkinson's disease. Spouse: Lois Hauder Drawbond. Parents: J. Samuel and Ella Mae Harshbarger Drawbond (deceased). Other survivors: children Douglas, Jeffrey, Donna Yutzy; two grandchildren.

Enz, Jacob J., 82, Elkhart, Ind., died Sept. 9. Spouse: Joan Veston Enz. Parents: Henry and Lydia Enz (deceased). Other survivors: children John, David; three grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 13 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart.

Herschberger, Gerald "Gary," 45, Shipshewana, Ind., died Aug. 29 in a grain silo accident. Spouse: Rose Hershberger Herschberger. Parents: Perry and Annabelle Yoder Herschberger. Other survivors: children Jared, Joel, Jessica. Funeral: Sept. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Kaufman, Mary Dintaman, 82, Topeka, Ind., died Aug. 27. Spouse: Vernon Kaufman (deceased). Parents: William and Susan Seidner Dintaman (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Bonnie Schultz, Roger, Birdene Ringenberg; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Kiehl, Sharon Long, 58, Delavan, Ill., died Sept. 17. Spouse: Robert G. Kiehl. Parents: Curtis and Geraldine Crawford Long (deceased). Other survivors: children Bobbie Litwiller, Kelly Taylor, Teresa Miller; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 20 at Hopedale, Ill.

Landes, Edna Bishop, 82, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 10. Spouse: Daniel M. Landes (deceased). Parents: Henry and Clara Gross Bishop (deceased). Survivors: children D. Richard, R. Dale, Gerald, Judy Garrido; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 12 at Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Leichty, Lavina Roth, 90, Wayland, Iowa, died Sept. 5. Spouse: Simon Leichty (deceased). Parents: Ben and Mary Graber Roth (deceased). Survivors: children Esther Marner, Rachel, Orlin, Lorene, Anna Lewis, Russell, Roger, Kenneth, Phyllis Schlatter, Wilbur; 23 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Longacre, Susan Gehman, 45, Quakertown, Pa., died Aug. 17. Spouse: Horace A. Longacre. Parents: Addie and Robert Gehman. Other survivors: children Gregory, Nathan, Brandon. Funeral: Aug. 22 at Quakertown.

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classifieds

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- **Grace Mennonite Church**, Pandora, Ohio, seeks applicants for ***minister of youth and Christian education***. Preferably full-time.
  Contact Angie Renner at 419-222-8532 or <rennerca@wcoil.com>.

- **Trissels Mennonite Church**, Broadway, Va., has an opening for a 1/4-time ***youth minister***. Please contact Trissels Mennonite Church, 540-896-7289 or email <trisselsmc@juno.com>.

- **Peace flag:** White, all-weather has navy and purple embroidered outline of dove with green olive branch. 11x14 inches. $11.60 includes tax and shipping.
  Wilma Miller, Stitches and More, P.O. Box 116, Mount Joy, PA 17552; 717-653-5755; <wilmajm@desupernet.net>.

- **Pine Lake Fellowship Camp**, Meridian, Miss., seeks ***leadership in camping ministry***. Positions include administrator, maintenance, summer programming.
  Contact Cheryl Landis, 601-693-9985; <jclandis3@juno.com>.

- **Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks two full-time/year-round positions: ***program director*** and ***maintenance person***. Both open immediately.
  For further information, contact Doc Johnson at 815-646-4344 or <doc@mennohaven.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***constituent relations coordinator*** to create and maintain communications patterns between EMM and church leaders/members. Full-time position begins February 2002. Mission experience and familiarity with Lancaster Mennonite Conference required.
  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline Oct. 19.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***representative to Middle East/West Asia*** to strategize and implement new mission initiatives and to supervise long-term workers. Part-time (20-40%) position begins January 2002. Middle East/Muslim cross-cultural mission experience preferred.
  Contact Darrel Hostetter at 717-898-2251 or <darrelh@emm.org>. Application deadline Nov. 16.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***accountant*** to provide financial services for its long-term international programs. Part-time position (80%) begins Nov. 19, 2001. Responsibilities include reviewing financial reports, initiating correspondence with overseas offices, arranging payments and assisting in budget development. Requirements: commitment to missions, ability to handle details well, and training and/or experience in accounts payable, accounts receivable and MS Excel.
  Contact Jeanette Hess at <jeanetteh@emm.org> or 717-898-2251 by Oct. 15.

- **Peacemaking resource: *From Violence to Wholeness*** is a 10-part program in the spirituality and practice of active nonviolence, offering groups and congregations valuable resources to address the violence and conflicts in our lives and in our world.
  Available from Pace e Bene Franciscan Nonviolence Center, 1420 W. Bartlett St., Las Vegas, NV 89106; tel./fax 702-648-2281; email <paceebene@compuserve.com>.

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, is urgently seeking a ***qualified accountant (CPA level)*** to fill a staff vacancy. This position begins Jan. 7, 2002. Rosslyn is a joint effort of Mennonite, Southern Baptist and Assemblies of God missions in eastern Africa, yet the school is nondenominational in faith and practice. Rosslyn serves over 440 students K-12, and it is fully accredited with MSA and ACSI.
  Email Dena Brent, Superintendent, <DenaB@rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke> or airmail to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** has ***RN opportunities*** in our health-care center serving seniors. Enjoy a compassionate, pleasant, family-oriented environment in a rural setting of Lancaster County, Pa. Good pay and excellent benefits. Assistance with moving expenses available. Hours include full-time 3-11 or 11-7 for supervisory or charge nurse positions. Landis Homes is a ministry committed to providing quality programs for the enrichment of senior adults in an environment of Christian love.
  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; call 717-581-3936 or visit our web site at <www.landishomes.org>.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** seeks a full-time ***administrator***, July 2002. Call Kay Predmore at 717-626-9551 for further details.

- **Choice Books of West Coast**, a new California inter-Mennonite corporation, is accepting applications for an immediate opening of a full-time ***administrator***. Duties: to provide visionary leadership in building a strong distributor organization to market Choice Books to general market retailers throughout state of California, and to administer daily activities of the organization. Qualifications: prefer college or seminary degree and business experience, fiscal/budget and people management skills and computer proficiency. Shall be a member of an Anabaptist church with ability to relate to broad Anabaptist constituency. Salary and benefits commensurate with experience.
  Send resume or contact Jim Gaede, Chair, 603 N. Birch Ave., Reedley, CA 93654; 559-638-2455; email <jmgaede@psnw.com>.

- **Community Caring Inc.** seeks ***chief executive officer***. CEO needed for progressive rural retirement community in Michigan. Community Caring Inc. of Fairview, Mich., seeks as its first CEO someone with a sense of mission, faith, vision and strong development and team-building skills. Must have at least 5 yrs. administrative/leadership experience and a bachelor's degree. Prefer some graduate-level work and that experience/education be related to health care, business or older adult housing and services. CCI is located in beautiful, northeast rural Michigan and has 60 nursing beds, including a dementia unit, and 76 independent living units. We are expanding into assisted living as well.
  For information or to submit a resume, contact Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-9689; fax 219-534-3254; email <tim@mhsonline.org>.

- **Frederick Mennonite Community** seeks a ***director of operations*** to provide leadership in the daily operation of this CCRC community. The community consists of a 62-bed Medicaid/Medicare and JCAHO accredited health-care center along with a memory-loss support unit, assisted living units and independent apartments and cottages. Located 45 minutes northeast of Philadelphia in scenic northwest Montgomery County, Frederick Mennonite provides a full continuum of services to over 275 residents. Minimum candidate requirements are: Christian actively involved in a local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, PA nursing home administrator's license, 6 years senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills.
  Send inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <kirkstiffney@aol.com>.

Statement of ownership

Statement required by the act of August 12, 1970, Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code, showing the ownership, management and circulation of *The Mennonite*, published 48 times a year (except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31, Nov. 27) at Scottdale, PA 15683, as of October 1, 2001.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher and editor are: Publisher—Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; Editor—Everett J. Thomas, 1700 S. Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526.
2. The owner is the Mennonite Church USA.
3. The known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: Brotherly Aid Plan, 64 Main St., Salunga, PA 17538; Farmers First Bank, 1636 Lititz Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601; Sylvan Industries Inc., PO Box 342, Scottdale, PA 15683. The average number of copies of each issue sold or distributed through the mail or otherwise to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown was 15,706. The average total number of copies of each issue printed during the same 12 months was 16,377.

Everett J. Thomas, Editor
October 2001

by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Set Free: A Journey Toward Solidarity Against Racism by Iris de León-Hartshorn, Tobin Miller Shearer and Regina Shands Stoltzfus (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) uses anecdote, analysis and scriptural reflection to describe the names racism calls us. The book addresses internalized racist oppression among communities of color and internalized racist superiority among white communities.

Laughter Through the Tears: The Church Celebrates! by Bertha Landers (Faith & Life Resources, 2001, $17.99) provides 19 fully developed worship services designed to minister to all ages and many different situations—from welcoming and dedication to retirement and death. Hymns from *Hymnal: A Worship Book* are incorporated throughout.

The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History by James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter (Pandora Press Canada and Herald Press, 2001, $26.50) contests the myth of redemptive violence that has formed the subtext of U.S. history courses for decades. The authors view U.S. history from the perspective of mutuality and interdependence. It is highly readable.

Spiritual RX: Prescriptions for Living a Meaningful Life by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat (Hyperion, 2001, $14) is a paperback reprint of the book (recommended by *The Mennonite*). This interfaith guide to 37 essential spiritual practices is organized in an alphabet—from Attention to Zeal—with a chapter devoted to each practice.

Morning By Morning: Daily Meditations From the Writings of Marva J. Dawn by Marva J. Dawn, edited by Karen A. Dismer (Eerdmans, 2001, $14), is arranged by the day of the week and includes an opening Bible verse or hymn portion, excerpts from one of Dawn's books or articles, and a closing prayer starter. An additional section provides meditations for 12 special days in the year, including Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and Thanksgiving.

Responding to God ($44.95) explains Mennonite Church USA's firstfruits funding system. It includes three years of worship emphasis and youth meetings, customizable offering envelopes, bulletin inserts, connections to narrative spending plans, telephone or email consultation and an easy-to-follow instruction manual. Order from Mennonite Mutual Aid Stewardship Education Center, 800-348-7468, ext. 269, or <stewardship@mma-online.org>.

From the Darkest Night: Meditations for Abuse Survivors by Melanie Jansen (Faith Alive Resources, 2001, $14.95) shares the author's experience as an abuse survivor and insights that helped her toward healing and wholeness. The book also includes Jansen's artwork.

The God Who Won't Let Go by Peter van Breemen (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $10.95) reminds us that in an age when everything seems temporary, the love of God is permanent. God won't let go of us.

Inviting God In: Scriptural Reflections and Prayers Throughout the Year by Joyce Rupp (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $12.95) is organized according to the seasons of the church year.

Jacob's Journey: From Zagradowka Toward Zion by J.M. Klassen is an autobiography of this Canadian Mennonite leader who was long active in Mennonite Central Committee. To order copies call the author at 204-339-6198 or write 11 Reichert St., Winnipeg, MB R2G 3C7.

A Leader for His Time by Esther Epp-Tiessen (CMBC Publications, 2001, $15.78 U.S.) is a biography of Canadian Mennonite leader J.J. Thiessen.

Recommended reading

Soul Wilderness: A Desert Spirituality by Kerry Walters (Paulist Press, 2001, $12.95) is not for the faint of heart or for those who want an easy, comfortable spirituality. The title refers to "the place where God dwells. It's from the inner desert that God speaks to our hearts." Like other mystical writers, Walters develops a nomenclature—using Greek and Hebrew terms—to try to approximate the experience of divine reality. He ably describes our "household gods," the ways we avoid meeting God. He offers this realistic warning: "We may admire—from a safe distance—mystical language about dying to make room for God, but what we really think is that only a lunatic would voluntarily renounce a comfortable spirituality for a wilderness journey of pain and death." Do we dare take such a journey?—*gh*

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Marla J. Cole

Prayer and the power of the press

In the wake of events on Sept. 11, many are calling for prayer. We are asked to pray for the people of our nation, our government and our enemies. Yet I have not heard a call to pray for the media—an entity with tremendous power.

Since Sept. 11, we have been assaulted by images and words. How many times have we watched the World Trade Center's twin towers collapse? How many times have we heard the phrase, "war on terrorism"? How many times have we heard the word "recession"?

We all know, at some level, that the media is a vehicle through which stories and events of conflict are disseminated. At the same time, we are a nation of news junkies. We watch. We listen. We read. Because we all have been affected by this tragedy and may continue to be, we want to keep ourselves updated on what is happening.

However, we need to be mindful of what can happen to us when we watch news channels for hours or log on to one web site after another. We need to remember that, despite the fact that media are to report in an unbiased fashion, the media are made up of people, with their own beliefs and biases. And if we are not aware of this and do not question what the media tell and show us, we open ourselves to the dangerous manipulation of our emotions and thoughts.

Trancelike state: Many studies have shown that when we watch TV, we enter a trancelike state. Images shown to us over and over while in this state have a greater effect on us and our subconscious. While the attack was horrific, how much more were people incited toward revenge because of the images being shown over and over?

Even if we are not sitting glued to the continuous coverage provided by news channels and simply have the radio or TV on in the background, we are still affected. The same things are repeated until something new happens. Being told over and over that the nation is heading into a major recession, that there are massive layoffs around the country and that consumer confidence is reaching an all-time low will affect most people, if only for a short time.

In addition to looking at how and how often we are told things about the tragedy and fallout, we should also question what we are hearing and reading. For example, we were told the Dow dropped almost 685 points on Sept. 17, the largest drop in history. The problem with this is that, at least on the channel I was watching and in the newspaper I read, the reporters never put this into perspective.

Economic fears: The truth is that by percentage, the Dow's loss on Sept. 17 was less severe than proclaimed by the media, ranking 14th and equaling less than a third of the biggest-ever drop of 22.6 percent in the 1987 crash. Even the weeklong slide touted as being the worst week in history was misleading. The point drop may have topped 1,000, but by percentage it was only the fifth worst week in history. It is plausible that reporting such as this has contributed to perpetuating people's economic fears.

Why do media tend to report out of context and show us images over and over that they know will affect how people think and feel? They have time and column constraints, technology has made it easy to bombard us with information and images, and they are a business. There is competition to have the most attention-grabbing headline.

Unfortunately this usually results in the most sensationalized headline. For those who do not question what and in what form information is presented to them, the media can have a powerful affect.

What happened on Sept. 11 was heinous; we all mourn the senseless loss of lives. In such a time as this, the media have tremendous responsibility and power to set aside their usual business practices for the overall good of the nation and, indeed, the world. The media not only tell us how the nation is thinking and reacting, but our leaders and leaders of other nations watch and listen along with us.

We need to pray that the media be mindful of this responsibility and power—understanding that, in this case, the media could be indirectly helping lead our country down a dangerous path. Let us add the media, including church periodicals, to our prayer list and ask God for the power of prayer to overcome the power of the press.—*mc*

For those who do not question what and in what form information is presented to them, the media can have a powerful affect.

the Mennonite

October 16, 2001

Jesus liberates us

page 4

6 Faith, life, church and the Anabaptist vision
8 Funds show upside to financial downturn
9 Living Water rises in the Windy City
16 Singing, the prayers we breathe

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

After Sept. 11

I was not raised a Mennonite, but I now am one. I was, in fact, raised in a church tradition that was a huge proponent of redemptive violence, both theologically and socially. I, however, was taken hold of by the love and peace of Christ through wonderful, loving Mennonites in Chicagoland and have never looked back.

Nevertheless, the events of Sept. 11 have placed me at a crossroads like no other single event in my life has. They make me ask myself, Where do I stand? Do I stand on the side of the understandable but very fallen reaction of retribution? Or should I be on the side of Jesus' story of nonviolence? I guess I have changed a lot more than I thought, because the decision did not take long.

I am glad *The Mennonite* published what it did in the Sept. 25 issue. It tells me I made the right choice in becoming a Mennonite. I can see that I am at home.—*Joe Kidd, Kendallville, Ind.*

I appreciated the Sept. 25 edition, devoted to the events of Sept. 11. These events pose new challenges to Mennonites. As I have listened to others and read many things via email and various Web sites, I have been troubled by a lack of peace theology in our public Mennonite conversation. The arguments given for restraint and peace are rooted in geopolitical analysis, not spirituality or theology. However astute such arguments may be, they must grow out of an authentic biblical peace witness. This is especially true for a tradition with such a limited history of engaging government on issues of war and peace. We need to be hearing from our theologians and biblical scholars. I fear that in our efforts to be relevant and effective in our world, we are straying from solid footing in a biblical peace theology. I encourage *The Mennonite* to take leadership in helping us have a meaningful conversation about our peace theology. How has our peace theology changed? What do these changes mean for us at this time? What theological mileposts might help us at this time?—*Phil Waite, Berwyn, Ill.*

The more I think about the responses I've read in the Sept. 25 issue, the more confident I've become in reaching the following conclusion: Unless you personally had a family member or close friend killed (or maimed, disfigured or severely burned) as a result of the terrorist acts on Sept. 11, I don't believe you're entitled to express an opinion that's contrary to that held by the vast majority of those who were personally impacted by those events.

I was embarrassed, as a Mennonite, to read Everett Thomas' assertion that "we carry a unique agony into these conversations" about the terrorist acts and the nation's response ("Seeking to Be Prophetic and Patriotic"). We should be just a bit more considerate when talking about the "agony" we're feeling when it's pretty clear that very few (if any) of us who read or write for *The Mennonite* have any idea what the victims' families and friends are going through.

God, it's clear, hates violence and brings justice (often violent justice) to those who perpetrate such acts. We see it in the Old and New testaments, and we've seen it throughout modern history as well. We, as Mennonites, find it difficult to imagine violent justice as an appropriate response to such terrorist acts. It's clear, however, as Paul states in his letter to the Romans, that governments on earth are God's agents, and these agents have served and will continue to serve as a means by which God secures his brand of justice.—*Randy Kratz, Pennsburg, Pa.*

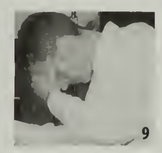
Thank you for the superb collection of thoughts following the Sept. 11 tragedy. A Baptist friend has questioned me at length about my attitude toward flying the flag, response to violence and many other things. I plan to take this magazine to her today. If being proud were not taboo for an old Mennonite woman, I would say I feel proud to be able to give her this publication. Thank you again for the excellent response to this horror.—*Dorothy Cutrell, Deland, Fla.*

Thank you to John Paul Lederach for his article ("The Challenge of Terror," Oct. 2) challenging us to view the events of Sept. 11 in a different light. He articulated clearly an appropriate response that makes sense from my Central America experience and is consistent with my faith. Our nation's desire to eliminate the support base of terrorist movements would be more effectively directed at the root causes than at unfriendly governments.—*Ron Flickinger, Indianapolis.*

Not only did we kill civilians by bombing Iraq, but thousands of children died because we refused them medical supplies. What if instead of dropping bombs we dropped medical supplies both in Afghanistan and Iraq? If food is

theMennonite

Vol. 4, No. 39, October 16, 2001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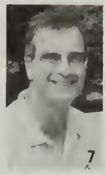
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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

ay readers say

needed, it can be dropped. Might this gesture possibly open doors for personnel to go into these countries to help? Might Peace Corps work be expanded? Might it eventually open the doors for educators? Yes, some lives might be lost. Would it be greater than an all-out war? In addition to the commandment, "Thou shall not kill," Jesus taught us in Luke 6:27-28, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."

If we use peaceful means to respond to aggression, is it not possible that we will make friends? If we make friends, we don't have to worry about killing the enemy. Are there other creative ways we can establish friendship with Iraq and Afghanistan? Might there be another way to deal with terrorism?—*Denzel Short, Livonia, Mich.*

I do not want my nation to go to war. The world does not need more victims of violence. I urge my fellow Christians to consider what it means to be followers of Christ at this time. At the heart of our faith is the symbol of the cross, the sign of God's love, mercy and forgiveness. The cross points to God's reconciling action to break down the wall of hostility between people and nations. The cross breaks the cycle of violence; war perpetuates it.

We should seek justice. A terrible crime against humanity was done on Sept. 11. We are justifiably angry. But we need to bring that anger under the rule of law. Our nation can cooperate with other nations through the United Nations and the International Court of Justice to identify the perpetrators, find them, arrest them, bring them to trial and punish them for their crimes. I can support my government toward these ends. But I am not willing to support my nation in a war.—*Duane K. Friesen, North Newton, Kan.*

Cover design by Merrill Miller with photo adapted from Rohn Engh

The true riches

Jesus liberates us to move on when our lives suffer sudden change.

by Tammerie Spires

Rohn Engh

The story Jesus tells in Luke 16:1-13 begins, "There was a rich man who had a manager." Someone accuses the manager of squandering the rich man's property, and the rich man hauls the manager in and says, "Explain yourself." Then he says, "You're fired."

Just like that, the manager's life is changed forever. He's just lost his livelihood. He says to himself, "What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me?"

What happened to the manager the day he got busted, the day his world came to an end, the day he lost everything? This is a good question for us to be asking these days.

From watching art critic Sister Wendy on TV, I learned about African-American artist Martin Puryear, who has been working independently and on commission since 1977. He had conventional art-school training at Catholic University of America in Washington in the early 1960s but also worked with African carpenters in a remote village in Sierra Leone as part of a Peace Corps program.

> **We appear bent on recreating our past, even though we fear and detest the present it has brought about. Again we are choosing the sword, even though it has brought the sword to our own throats.**

In an article in *Time*, Puryear talked about feeling the inaccessibility of Africa. "There is an incredible pain," he says, "that we black people feel at not being able to reach back and touch the country of origin the way every other hyphenated American can and does.

"Being there made me realize how inescapably American I was—not African. You know, you must embrace your identity as an American, not wallow in the idea that you're some kind of displaced, tribal person. Here you have responsibilities to your Americanness as well as your blackness."

As a mature artist, Puryear made a trip back to West Africa to search out some of the roots of his history. Shortly after he returned to the United States, there was a fire in his studio. This is an artist who works in wood. All his current work, all the new life coming from his hands, was lost in that fire.

Sound familiar?

Sister Wendy's TV program showed a close-up of a beautiful wooden box. It was like a window into serenity, empty and yet full of peace. Then the camera moved back to show that the box was perched atop two stout branches, still with the bark on, with spots where smaller branches had been whittled off. These branches came down, intertwined once, then clasped the axles of a rough-hewn wheel.

This wonderfully strange sculpture is called "Sanctuary." According to Sister Wendy, the beautiful, serene, smooth-planed box at the top represents shelter, stability. The rough-hewn wheel touching the earth represents mobility.

Where does sanctuary come from, according to Puryear? Not from retreat to the box but from serenity in motion, from moving forward and taking with you what gives you stability, what is your foundation.

Alternate futures: For this artist, sanctuary from the fire came from moving forward, not from retreat into the ashes of the past. Puryear found liberation in being freed from what was and what had been. They no longer had power to determine his future. He was freed to choose alternate forms, alternate futures.

This is also what has happened to the dishonest steward. In getting caught, having his current life cut off, he is suddenly freed of the future he was headed toward. Because his future life in crime is cut off, he is freed of the constraints of his past ways of being.

He is now liberated to choose a new way of being. What he chooses—however oddly and roughly—is community. He is suddenly free to give back to the community, to invest in its future—and thereby in his own future. He casts his lot with the people around him, choosing to no longer oppress them in the name of the rich man.

"And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly" (Luke 16:8a).

On Sept. 11 we had our current ideas about ourselves ripped away. Our illusions of security, our myths of national self-determination, all went up in smoke. What will we do now?

We appear bent on recreating our past, even though we fear and detest the present it has brought about. Again we are choosing the sword, even though it has brought the sword to our own throats.

Our studio of work in progress has burned down. There has been great loss of life, which

I mourn. Yet I see the potential for liberation, which would help resurrect meaning in our lives.

Liberation: Jesus is all about liberation, for the oppressed and the oppressors. He said he came "to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free" (Luke 4:18b).

This tragedy releases us from captivity to false ideas about ourselves and our power. It gives us a clear sight that we have missed opportunities for peacemaking, community-building and helping the least of these. And it frees us from a future in which we continue in isolation and "affluenza" (addiction to wealth). But only if we choose differently.

This parable shows us that even a person entrenched in an unjust system can choose to act more justly and for the benefit of the larger community. Even a nation entrenched in and contributing to unjust systems can choose in the midst of that to change, to act more justly and work on behalf of the global community.

We didn't get where we are overnight. It has taken centuries of accumulated decisions and actions. Now much of that accumulation lies in rubble. How will we make meaning of the lives lost in that rubble? By taking more life or by cooperating with our Lord in making peace?

In this parable, Jesus says, "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much" (16:10). We may want to speak directly to world players and make the case for peace, but that's not likely to happen. Does that mean we skip talking to our friends and neighbors, to the local paper or radio call-in show? Not according to Jesus. Just because our calls for peace are outnumbered by voices for retribution, do we quit calling? Not according to Jesus. We are to be faithful with what little power we have and trust God to multiply it, like loaves and fishes.

Dishonest wealth: Jesus continues: "If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own?" (16:11-12).

I live and work in a country whose economy and corporations were built on slave labor. My 401K includes matching contributions from a company whose objective is to enrich the rich. I will someday inherit land that was probably acquired with some injustice to the original owners.

If I am not a faithful steward of what I did not earn, why should Jesus entrust me with the true riches? He shouldn't. But thanks to Christ's reconciling work and God's grace and forgiveness, which I cannot earn, I am an heir to the reign of God. I have to believe this to be able to move forward, to find sanctuary in mobility, in motion toward the reign of God.

"No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth" (16:13).

Opening: The events of Sept. 11 were not Christ's doing, yet they open a door for Christ the Liberator to walk through. Our choices are about what we do with that opening. We have been liberated from our past ideas about ourselves as a people who are completely good, secure, in God's will. We can see ourselves more clearly now and perhaps hear the world more clearly. What will we do with this vision?

Martin Puryear learned in Africa just how American he was, that he had to embrace his identity as an American, that he couldn't wallow in the idea of being some displaced, tribal person.

Maybe we are few in number, but God can make a mighty shout of our cry. Maybe we are powerless, but the Bible is full of stories where God did wonders through the powerless.

We have responsibilities, too. We are Mennonite, and we are inescapably North American. We cannot wallow in our ethnic or adopted Mennonite identity in a way that avoids the questions facing all North Americans.

I keep hearing that 80 percent of U.S. citizens favor an armed response to the recent violence, and I wonder about that other 20 percent. When will it be heard?

Another stewardship story says that just as much was expected of the servant who was given one talent as the one who was given 10 (Matthew 25:14-30). Maybe we have few resources, but God can make much of our little. Maybe we are few in number, but God can make a mighty shout of our cry. Maybe we are powerless, but the Bible is full of stories where God did wonders through the powerless.

Tammerie Spires is associate pastor at Peace Mennonite Church and co-pastor of Many Peoples Mennonite Fellowship, both in Dallas. This article is adapted from a sermon she preached Sept. 23.

why I became a Mennonite

third in a series

Faith, life, church and the Anabaptist vision

One of the hallmarks of Mennonite faith is that members choose to join the church. It is a voluntary community. We offer a series of articles by members of Mennonite congregations who write about why they chose to become Mennonite. We hope these stories help us all reflect on our own relationship with the new Mennonite Church.—**Editors**

by Tom Frank

The voice of the Holy Spirit spoke to my wife and me early on a Sunday morning in 1995 in Toledo, Ohio. We woke up that day not feeling good. We had a solid marriage, a wonderful family, good health, a beautiful house, a big Mercedes Benz, a great job, fame and fortune. But we were not feeling good.

For some mysterious reason I said to Anneliese, "I think we should go to church today."

And she said, "I've waited a long time to hear you say that."

But where should we go? We thought of a young couple we knew and admired. They were active, hardworking, vibrant people, but they had an uncommon aura of serenity, softness, goodness and kindness. They were Mennonites, shining their light. And we saw that light.

The spirit of Jesus Christ living in two Mennonites drew us to the Mennonite Church, and we found a treasure there.

We decided to go to their church that same day. The spirit of Jesus Christ living in two Mennonites drew us to Toledo Mennonite Church, and we found a treasure there.

About 15 months later Anneliese and I were baptized at Toledo Mennonite. Our lives were changed forever. Almost every member of that church somehow contributed to our spiritual journey. The pastor inspired and instructed us. A saintly couple came to our home for months to lead and nurture us. The music team lifted us up and helped soften years of hardness. Countless members embraced us. Small group meeting became the highlight of our week.

The next stage in my development as a Christian involved reading. I became immersed in the Bible, plowed through theology textbooks, read journals of pious people, works of Christian apologists and modern devotional writers.

Later I discovered the written work of Anabaptist and Mennonite leaders of the early 16th century and the mid-20th century. Through them I am learning what it means to be a Christian of the Anabaptist-Mennonite persuasion.

The Anabaptist vision of faith, life and church has kept me in the Mennonite community. In reading the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, I noted that the statements often include an ethical component. For example, one says to "show forth the obedience of faith in word and deed." Another says that "Scripture tells us not only what to believe, but how to live."

Here was a strong message, not uniquely Anabaptist but certainly identified with the Anabaptist vision, that faith is necessary but not sufficient. To faith we are to add faithfulness, that our life should be patterned after the life of Jesus as Lord, which turns out to be a radical form of Christian discipleship.

This Anabaptist-Mennonite view of life as radical discipleship comes directly from Scripture. (See, for example, Matthew 4:17; 7:21, 24-27; Luke 8:19-21; John 8:51; 1 John 3:17-18.) Notice that the words "acting" or "action" are embedded in three of these quotations; action is implied as "repentence" in the first and as "obedience" in the last.

In the Gospels we find these specific directions from Jesus about life as he would have us live it:

- Be humble, gentle and merciful.
- Be compassionate, kind and patient.
- Be honest, faithful and self-controlled.
- Be peaceful-nonviolent in every aspect of daily life.
- Renounce self-interest; instead be a servant.
- Do not worry about money and material things.
- Give what you do not need to other people who have unfilled needs.
- Love everybody, even strangers, enemies and people who will not love you back.
- Get out into the world and preach the gospel. Fulfill the Great Commission. That

Courtesy photo

means you, not only the pastor or the missionary in the field, but you, in your hometown.

This same call to life is contained in numerous epistles: Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, Thessalonians, John, James and Peter.

These words describe the life Jesus led and the life he requires of us. He said to do these things, not just talk about them. This is not about convenient Christianity but a call to radical and costly discipleship.

The Mennonite church, descended from the 16th-century Anabaptists, is meant to be

- a people determined to follow Jesus Christ in faith and in daily life;
- a community of love and mutual accountability;
- peaceful and nonviolent in all circumstances;
- members dependent on each other for spiritual and material support;
- a church dedicated to serving and evangelizing a needy world.

Our Anabaptist brothers and sisters of the 16th century suffered to establish and maintain a church with these characteristics, no matter what the cost and even unto death. It is for us to decide if this is the kind of church we should have in the 21st century. I think it is.

What keeps us in this Christian denomination is the beauty of the Anabaptist vision of Christ-centered faith, Christ-directed life and the concept of church as a love-based fellowship.

I seek now with Anneliese to claim this Anabaptist vision. Results to date are mixed.

I have been fortunate to acquire the faith of the Anabaptists through the amazing grace of God. For faith I rest comfortably in the Holy Spirit.

As to a life of radical discipleship, I struggle. It is new. It is counter-intuitive. It is hard for me. I am frustrated by weakness, painfully aware of my sinful nature. I am not used to being obedient. Hypocrisy threatens me daily. The narrow road is painfully difficult, especially after more than 50 years of godlessness. Old habits die hard.

The only recourse for a wretch like me is to pray for grace to repent, to change direction as follows:

- Pray for strength to love without exception after years of loving selectively.
- Pray for grace to be humble after a lifetime of self-centeredness.
- Pray for a peaceful spirit and release from habitual anger.
- Pray to become a servant not seeking to be served.
- Learn how to start giving and stop getting.
- Pray for the courage to go forth and preach the gospel in my hometown.

Now we wonder if the treasure called the Anabaptist vision is drifting away from us. Mennonites in North America have achieved remarkable success in holding to a Bible-directed, Christ-centered faith and have established wonderful institutions for community service, disaster relief, peacemaking, education, publications, the mission field and health care.

As a newcomer to the Mennonite fold, however, I sense we may be losing focus on grass-roots Christian discipleship and the concept of church as a grass-roots community based on indiscriminate love, accountability and mutual aid, dedicated to radical discipleship and mission outreach at the local level.

Prominent Mennonite leader John A. Lapp writes in *Mennonite Quarterly Review*: "The classic words that once permeated Mennonite and Brethren in Christ self-consciousness—words like church, community, radical discipleship, cross bearing, peace, mutuality, humility, separation, mission—appear less pervasive than they once did. … The identity crisis in our church grows out of a declining memory. The story is told less often."

The Anabaptist concepts of life and church do not permeate our education programs, publications, conferences, assemblies and pastoral messages. The Mennonite vision of life and church seems largely absent. I'm left with these questions:

- Is the Anabaptist vision about to become a relic of history?
- Is it time for us as a church to take steps to recover the Anabaptist vision of life and church before it is too late?
- Should this be a concern of Mennonite Church USA?

Let us pray for faith, life and the church.

Tom Frank lives in West Simsbury, Conn.

What keeps us in this Christian denomination is the beauty of the Anabaptist vision of Christ-centered faith, Christ-directed life and the concept of church as a love-based fellowship.

Funds show upside to financial downturn

Investing with good causes has meant better returns

We didn't get caught up in the dot-com mania like some of our peer groups did.

—John Liechty

All the signs seem to point to a recession. Layoffs are increasing, earnings are down and the financial markets are dropping. Therefore, many individual investors are starting to notice a significant drop in their investment portfolios.

But investors who have money with Mennonite funds may not be faring as badly. Praxis Mutual Funds from Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) and Sarona Global Fund from Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) are doing relatively well during this economic slowdown.

The Praxis Mutual Funds invest according to the philosophy of stewardship investing, balancing a need for productive use of financial resources with a deep-seated concern for others. The Praxis Core Stock Fund was down 10.5 percent this year as of Aug. 1. But it still outperformed the stocks on Standard & Poor's 500 index by 2.9 percent. The MMA Praxis Intermediate Income B was up 6.6 percent for the year, while the MMA Praxis International B was down 24.4 percent this year.

Praxis president John Liechty says MMA's portfolio managers have done a good job of selecting the right stocks that have held up well during the downturn. Managers look for stocks that are underpriced in the market—usually called value stocks—as opposed to growth stocks, which are stocks that are expected to grow above normal rates.

Some of Praxis' most successful stocks include Lowe's (up 67 percent through Aug. 31), Bank of America (up 36 percent) and Dell (up 22 percent).

Because of this focus on value stocks, MMA portfolio managers stayed away from a lot of technology companies over the last several years. "While that hurt us when the markets were in their rip-roar mood in 1997, 1998 and 1999, it obviously has worked to our advantage here in the last 18 months," Liechty says.

"We like to pride ourselves on the fact that we have a discipline and we stick to it. So investors know we are not going to be chasing the most current investment fad. We didn't get caught up in the dot-com mania like some of our peer groups did."

Because of the economic downturn, a few investors have closed their Praxis accounts. But overall, Liechty says, MMA has seen an impressive growth in the level of investors. "We have been able to buck the trend, and people are continuing to invest money in the Praxis funds," he says.

MEDA's Sarona Global Investment Fund has had a tough year. But Gerhard Pries, president of MEDA Investments Inc., said it is not related to the overall market downturn.

Sarona is more like a certificate of deposit than a mutual fund. No matter how the fund is doing, investors are paid a set interest rate. Sarona invests directly in private companies internationally and not in North America. By providing loans to microcredit lending institutions, Sarona enables poor people to buy new machinery, increase inventory, do advertising, market their goods, buy raw materials and improve their businesses in other ways.

Pries is concerned about the current economic crisis in Argentina. The Sarona Fund does not currently have any investments in Argentina, but Pries says the currency problem in Argentina could cause problems across the whole continent.

"We have had a pretty good year, generally," Pries says, "but we have had some tough experiences in a couple of our investments. It is just a matter of hitting it right some years and not so right some other years."—*Brian Hook*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

The sound of music

Eastern Mennonite Missions worker Barb Keener (right) trains a youth worship team in Lushnje, Albania.

Mennonite Men

October 16, 2001

Mennonite Men began as an organization in the General Conference Mennonite Church. With transformation taking place, Mennonite Men is now a jointly owned partnership of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. The purpose statement of Mennonite Men *"aims to provide an Anabaptist perspective on manhood that speaks to current issues. Its goals are to promote Christian growth, provide service opportunities, church missions and education among the men of the church. Mennonite Men also helps resource men's groups in local congregations, promotes men's resources written or presented by Mennonites and helps develop materials on specific men's issues."*

History of Mennonite Men

Mennonite Men began in the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1950. It grew out of the desire for service opportunities by men who were in Civilian Public Service during World War II and the overseas relief work directed by Mennonite Central Committee that followed. After a strong beginning in the 1950s, Mennonite Men was inactive in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1983, the Tenth Man church building program began and brought a resurgence of interest in Mennonite Men. The name "Tenth Man" comes from an old European Mennonite system of community organization where the "Schulze," or village mayor, had one elected assistant for every 10 adult male property owners in the village.

Tenth Man grants of up to $50,000 were given to young congregations—General Conference or dual-conference—for either building or purchasing their first church meetinghouse. In 1999 the program was expanded to include Mennonite Church congregations and tithing grants for building churches overseas.

A new interest in men's issues emerged in the 1990s, which was generated by parachurch groups such as Promise Keepers. With the revival of interest in Mennonite churches and formation of men's groups, Mennonite Men attempted to provide resources that might be used by men's groups.

Mennonite Men began and functioned as a lay movement until 1987 when a coordinator was employed part-time. Coordinators have included Randall Kaufman (1987-1990), Heinz Janzen (1990-1997) and Jim Gingerich (1997-present).

Closer Than a Brother: Exploring Spiritual Companionship for Men

The first in a series of five study booklets for men's groups, *Closer Than a Brother: Exploring Spiritual Companionship for Men* invites men to develop relationships of emotional and spiritual intimacy with each other. It introduces men to the benefits of being in a group of other Christian men and provides an overview of the topics of

Gary Hooley

Men's group early morning meeting at Sweet Home, Ore.

the four subsequent studies: friendship, money and power, sexuality and family relationships. The goal of the study series, designed for ages 40 to 60, is to nurture disciplined, spiritual companionship among men in a way that will help them grow closer to God.

Each study will contain biblical texts and background for study surrounding the focus topic, as well as suggestions for reflection, discussion and response. *Closer Than a Brother: Exploring Spiritual Companionship for Men* will be available Spring 2002.

Mennonite men have long gathered to do service in the church. In recent years, however, there has been a desire among many men to attend to issues of being, not just of doing. As women have taken their place in the church and society, men have had to re-evaluate who they are in the church and in the world. The emergence of Promise Keepers and other men's movements, including secular ones, has signified a quest among men to find their role in family, church and/or society. The movements also tell us that men want to be spiritually grounded and to have a meaningful relationship with God. While the large Promise Keepers rallies have waned, a proliferation of parachurch organizations have begun to serve groups of men who are seeking to live out Christian callings as men.

In MC Canada and MC USA about 10 percent of churches have men's groups as compared to about 60 percent that have women's groups. The number of men's groups in the Mennonite church is growing. Some of these are direct results of the Promise Keepers movement. Among the groups there is a call for resources that have an Anabaptist orientation.

If you would like to be a representative for men's ministry in your church, or be contacted as these studies become available, please call Jim Gingerich at 316-283-5100 or email jimg@mennoniteusa.org.

An idea whose time has come!

By Jean-Jacques Goulet

It is an exciting time to be a part of the Mennonite Church. These last few years, during the transformation of our church entities in Canada and the United States, we have had the freedom to dream dreams of what God is calling us to be. During this time, we have embraced the concept that we are called to be a missional church, a people, not just doing mission as part of our congregational lives, but reaching out across the street and around the world! The implications of such a shift in thinking will affect every area of our lives as disciples of Jesus from Sunday school, to worship, to how our national mission agencies carry out their mandate. The Tenth Man program of Mennonite Men is one attempt to help the church respond to this call to be missional.

Jean-Jacques Goulet is staff person for the Outreach and Church Planting Committee of the Witness Council of Mennonite Church Canada

Tenth Man, a name drawn from a mutual aid term used in the past among Mennonites in Russia, is a network of men and women who donate $100 twice a year. These moneys are specifically designated to help new congregations, with grants of up to $50,000, build or buy their first facilities. If we are to take seriously our call to be a missional people reaching across the world, it means we will help our brothers and sisters build their churches, whether they are in Edmonton or Denver. And it does not end there. A beautiful part of this jointly administered Canadian and U.S. program is that not only are churches being helped in Canada and the United States, but a tithe of all funds received in both countries is put aside to help build churches overseas. Whether it is in the Ukraine or Colombia, we are helping congregations be faithful to their call.

Tenth Man has already had a major impact on several Canadian churches, most recently the Chinese/Vietnamese congregations' joint building in Edmonton. Having recently pastored a congregation in that city, I witnessed the Chinese/Vietnamese congregations' joy and deep appreciation at receiving a $50,000 grant. It was a powerful reminder of the impact established churches can have on new congregations.

Tenth Man has modest goals of adding 25 new Canadian donors and 45 U.S. donors each year. I cannot help but dream: What if every year, in each Canadian congregation, there were five additional men and women committing themselves to donate $100 twice a year to help new churches acquire their own building? What a contribution would be made to the work of the Kingdom. I wonder—maybe the time has come!

Tenth Man Grants approved for six young congregations

A priority for Mennonite Men is to provide church building grants to newer congregations through its Tenth Man church building program. Mennonite Men's Laymen's Council approved six Tenth Man church building grants totaling $260,000, to be awarded between 2001 and 2005. Grants are made available by the several hundred donors who each give an average of $200 per year for this work.

Four congregations received grants this year

Grants totaling $89,700 have been awarded to four congregations this year. Two overseas churches received Tenth Man grants from the tithe that is for helping to build churches overseas. One grant helped replace the church building of Iglesia Cristiana Menonita de Colombia (Mennonite Church of Colombia) in Armenia Quindio, whose church building was destroyed by an earthquake. A second grant was given to Pueblo en Transformacion (People of Transformation), Mexico City. The congregation, located in the southwest corner of Mexico City, has outgrown its current facility. Their mission is to become a transforming community and to increase social ministry.

The Vietnamese and Chinese congregations in Edmonton, Alta., received a grant to purchase a church building and are using the same facility for their separate congregations. The building, with a seating capacity of over 200, is located in the heart of the Chinese and Vietnamese communities. The mission of the two churches is strongly evangelistic and service oriented. "During these years, many families and lives have been transformed," says Chau Dang, pastor. "Many lively testimonies have been shared about the positive and powerful work of the gospel which has been done in their lives... Finally, we move to this permanent location. Praise the Lord for his love and faithfulness!" Both churches relate to the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta.

Chau Dang

The church of tomorrow: children's church of Edmonton Vietnamese Mennonite

The most recent grant was awarded to West End Mennonite Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa., which purchased the former site of the bar/social club of American Legion Post 7. They have renovated it for use as a church.

"It was with great delight that the West End Mennonite Fellowship received from Lowell Detweiler a Tenth Man grant during our Sunday morning service two weeks ago," says Ann Martin, treasurer. "We cannot thank you and the other Mennonite Men enough for the encouragement this grant has been to us. We look forward to contributing twice annually to Mennonite Men."

Courtesy photo

Lowell Detweiler, secretary of Mennonite Men, presenting grant to Ann Martin, treasurer of West End Mennonite Fellowship.

Navajo congregation to be recipient of Tenth Man Grant

The Light of Life Mennonite Church, Farmington, N.M., will receive a Tenth Man grant of $50,000. Light of Life started in 1993 and is approximately 85 percent Navajo and 15 percent Anglo. The lease expired on the building they were renting, and they were forced to make a decision. The decision was that they would build a new church building. The church building has been constructed on the outskirts of Farmington. The neighborhood is low- to medium-income with a large mobile home court with mostly Navajo residents. The nearest Mennonite church is 200 miles away. The 5,558 square foot two-level building, to include a sanctuary and Sunday school space, was built at a cost of about $275,000. Many in the congregation are new

Arlen Godshall

Pastor George and Priscilla Wero visit with Becky Brunk (at left).

Continued on next page

Arlen Godshall

Light of Life Mennonite Church Building.

Christians. Many have been saved from alcoholism. Seventeen children are involved in the children's program. An urgent need for the congregation was to have a new facility. George Wero is pastor and Ben Stoner is co-pastor of Light of Life Mennonite Church. Membership is in the Rocky Mountain Mennonite Conference.

An expression of thanks was shared by Arnie Miller, who says, "Thank you for the generous grant. Without that grant I don't believe we could have built the nice building. We are anxious to begin reaching out into the neighborhood. One new person from the neighborhood attended our first church service this morning. God bless you and your organization of people who made the grant possible."

The need for more meetinghouses continues

"Studies in church growth agree that the most effective way to reach the unchurched is to start new congregations," says Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries. "The outreach of a new congregation is often enhanced when it is able to have its own meetinghouse. This is a great need that is not being met by any other organization," Miller points out. "The Tenth Man building program is greatly appreciated by new congregations and mission workers across North America."

Coordinator update

- The need of new churches building their first meetinghouse far exceeds the grants available.
- Men or women wishing to become part of Tenth Man are invited to donate $100 twice a year.
- Plans are to continue involvement with men's ministries ecumenically.
- A 15-minute video, *Places of Welcome: The Work of the Tenth Man Church Building Program,* is available from resource libraries or by contacting Mennonite Men.
- For more information about Mennonite Men contact the Newton office, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, 316-283-5100, email jimg@mennoniteusa.org.

Jim Gingerich, editor
Mennonite Men insert in ***The Mennonite*** and ***Canadian Mennonite***
Published annually
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P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347
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www2.southwind.net/~gcmc/mm/index.htm
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120 Duluth Avenue E
Montreal, Quebec H2W 1H1
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Yes, I would like to help new Mennonite churches!

☐ I want to give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year, to help new Mennonite churches buy or build their first permanent meetinghouse. I understand I will be contacted when my contribution is needed.

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of $________________

Name ____

Address ____

Phone ____________________ Home congregation ____________________

Return this form to: Tenth Man, c/o Carl Thieszen, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117 or Mennonite Church Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Living Water rises in the Windy City

Congregation reflects community's cultural diversity

CHICAGO—The scene at Living Water Community Church on a recent Sunday reflected the congregation's neighborhood. In Chicago's Rogers Park, one of the most culturally diverse communities of the country, Adeniki Fagunwa, Amy Ornée, Angelo Peterson, Chris Shapiro, Ludi Polanco and Rick Lee find themselves seated around tables after worship to enjoy pastor Sally Schreiner's lentil soup and share stories.

Peggy Beazley told of the time Living Water members agreed to do a house blessing for her new home, a newly renovated apartment in a former crack house.

"Sundays are always busy at this church," she said. "First, with all the praising and sharing, you never know when the worship service will end. On this Sunday, there was also a baptism in the lake and then a potluck. Finally, late in the afternoon, 10 tired people showed up at my door looking like something the cat dragged in. There were no fancy words, just, 'Bless the kitchen,' 'bless the bathroom,' and finally, 'Thank God we made it through the house.'

"I trembled before informing [them] that I had told other occupants of the building that they could have their rooms blessed too. [The Living Water members] just looked at each other and divided into three teams to begin the rounds of nearly a dozen other apartments. What I saw that day wasn't victorious Christian living. It was a great treasure in paper bags, the Lord working through exhausted people. That day I learned that if you use all your strength just to show up, that's OK. God will do the rest."

Living Water was started by Reba Place Church, a Mennonite congregation in Evanston, Ill. A group of Reba Place members that included Schreiner and Karl McKinney, who became co-pastors of the new church, moved into the Rogers Park area and began holding services in 1995.

"We are not highly defined by programs," Schreiner says. "We're into hospitality, not being a social service agency. We seek to be a Jesus-centered place where people's lives are transformed when they come into contact with the Holy Spirit."

Half the 140 people who regularly attend Living Water are youth. The congregation is in the process of calling a youth pastor, as Schreiner became the sole pastor after McKinney joined the staff of Mennonite Board of Missions in 2000.

Prayer walking is a significant part of Living Water's ministry. On Friday nights, a group from the congregation walks through the neighborhood invoking God's presence in the trouble spots.

MBM photo by Lynda Hollinger-Janzen

Members of Living Water Community Church in Chicago offer prayers of blessing to Ian Davenport and his family as he prepares to enter the military. Ministering in one of the nation's most diverse communities presents challenges not commonly found throughout the rest of the denomination.

On one walk, a Living Water team of three saw the manager of a drug-infested house sitting on her front steps. When asked if she wanted prayer, she said, "Yeah, I'm getting ready to kill somebody." A group of people drinking nearby joined hands with the threesome and surrounded the manager in prayer. When the prayer was finished, the manager said, "My spirit is quiet now."

One of the houses on the Living Water prayer beat has been transformed into a housing co-op, and another building known to be a center for drugs and prostitution is now a home for Russian immigrants. "Dare we say it was because of our prayer?" Schreiner asked.

"I don't know what I'm doing much of the time," she says. "We go because the Lord wants us to. This neighborhood has challenged me to grow in my faith and boldness. We meet such crazy situations that we really can't do anything about, but we invite God into them.

"When I go back to the monocultural, suburban community I grew up in, I feel impoverished. Life here is a daily adventure. I don't need to read novels. I'm living one."

Although many nations of the world are represented at Living Water, Schreiner encourages an awareness of global mission. In fact, the congregation is sending its fifth overseas mission worker: Amy Ornée to Belfast, Northern Ireland. "We want to continue to be engaged in the ministries that Jesus began on this earth," Schreiner says.—*Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

Retirement facility bids beds beddy-bye

The Bible says the Son of Man has no place to rest his head. But some Jamaicans now might, thanks to a Mennonite-affiliated retirement community.

Menno Haven, located in Chambersburg, Pa., had acquired new hospital beds for its nursing center earlier this year, replacing 41 old beds still in good shape.

"They are still quite usable, but they were to be discarded," says director of purchasing Gerry Lehman. "That is when we decided that somewhere in this world people might really have a need for these beds."

Lehman contacted My Brother's Brother, a Pittsburgh-based organization that sends shipments of supplies to Third-World countries. My Brother's Brother arranged to send Menno Haven's 41 beds to hospitals in Jamaica.

Bluffton professor sees increased Web site traffic, opportunities to promote peace since Sept. 11

BLUFFTON, Ohio—The terrible events of Sept. 11 initially brought automobiles and subways to a halt in Manhattan and grounded airplanes nationwide. But the attacks on the World Trade Center prompted an astonishing increase in traffic for a Bluffton College professor's Web site.

Mary Ann Sullivan, professor of English, has spent the last four years compiling a Web site of images of famous architecture and sculpture from around the world. Her site now holds more than 4,000 images taken, scanned and edited by Sullivan herself, including some photographs of the World Trade Center.

Sullivan expected a little more traffic because of the attacks. Her site normally receives about 7,000 hits a day. But in the first 12 days following Sept. 11, nearly 1.5 million hits were recorded, including 524,000 on Sept. 12 alone.

Sullivan usually receives several emails a day, thanking her for her site, sharing how helpful it is and asking to borrow images. But on Sept. 11, she began to get some moving messages about the World Trade Center, like this one from one visitor to her site:

"I want to thank you for your work in the presentation of this Web page and its beautiful pictures. Maybe they will help me sleep at night, for all I have now are the images of death and destruction when I close my eyes. I hope all the families who have lost loved ones can one day find peace so that the rest of their lives are not lived in pain. Peace and health to you and yours.—Matt."

"This is pretty typical of what folks are saying when they write me after viewing the World Trade Center page," Sullivan says.

Something else extraordinary has happened. Sullivan's images are all over the Internet now, and several magazines and newspapers have requested permission to use her images. Some are even being used on T-shirts, with the proceeds from their sale going to the Red Cross.

Sullivan is also using her site to promote peace in her own way as she has found herself in email correspondence with an architect in Pakistan. "He sent me some pictures of famous buildings in Pakistan and is willing to send me more images of buildings in Muslim countries. I have agreed to put these images on my site. Maybe this is a strange way to think about peace, but my site consists of works in Western Christian countries. His contributions of images from Muslim countries will underline the fact that these countries are civilized after all with beautiful buildings."

Such buildings, Sullivan says, are worth studying, not bombing.—*Alaina Schulte*

Correction: The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board meeting disrupted by a blizzard was in February 2000, not 2001 as reported in the Oct. 2 issue.

MCC increases support to Palestinian victims

BEIT SAHOUR—As the number of Palestinians permanently injured by Israeli military fire rises, so does Mennonite Central Committee support for them. MCC has increased its contribution to the YMCA in Beit Sahour to $55,000 for rehabilitation programs. The YMCA provides physical therapy and counseling and encourages schools to make classrooms more handicap accessible.—*MCC News Service*

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Opportunity knocks for welfare recipients

MEDA-supported project targets chronically unemployed

WINNIPEG—For Michelle Nicolychuk, a single mother of three, finding a good job was hard work. Then she found the House of Opportunities, a new program supported by the Winnipeg chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA).

She received help writing a resume and learned to use the computer and Internet to look for work. Today she is a cook at a senior center. "It's a great job," Nicolychuk says.

The House of Opportunities, which opened in February, is part of Opportunities for Employment (OFE), a unique MEDA-supported job-finding agency in Winnipeg that has helped more than 2,000 people leave welfare since 1996.

OFE director Ted Klassen says more than 60 percent of people who come to OFE find work and stay at their jobs for at least six months, compared with the industry average of about 40 percent.

"That's pretty good, but we weren't satisfied," Klassen says. "We wanted to do something to help those who weren't succeeding, who were slipping through the cracks."

So the House of Opportunities was born.

It offers a warm, friendly, homelike atmosphere, as well as access to computers, Internet, email, fax, phone, skills training, resume service and help with job-interview skills.

Program co-coordinator Earl Fast says the program targets people who have not worked for years or who have low self-esteem, people who have been repeatedly told they do not have the skills or education to get a job.

"A lot of people who came in when we first opened had no intention of working," Fast says. "But when they start seeing people come through the door saying, 'I got a job,' it starts to rub off."

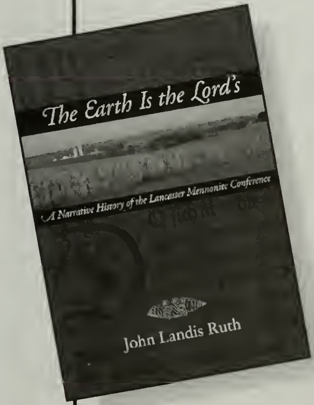
Klassen says not everyone who comes to the House of Opportunities will find work. He cites research showing why some people can not make the transition from welfare to employment: addictions, personal and family problems, lack of support at home. For some people, the house is a gateway to other services, such as help with an addiction or personal counseling—"services that can help start them on their way to employment," Klassen says.
—John Longhurst of MEDA News Service

When they start seeing people come through the door saying, 'I got a job,' it starts to rub off.

—Earl Fast

A Narrative History

of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference



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this date in Mennonite history

Oct. 16, 1997—Mennonite Women, formed by the merger of Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church, opens its first board meeting.

84 students enrolled in Guatemala seminary

GUATEMALA CITY—SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary in Guatemala City, has started the second semester of the academic year with 84 students, including 23 who are auditing classes. The students come from nine Mennonite bodies in seven countries.

Seven students are expected to graduate this month. SEMILLA has graduated 30 students since the first commencement exercises were held 10 years ago. They are now serving in a variety of positions, including congregational pastors and lay leaders, teachers and conference presidents.

SEMILLA is also planning to begin a master's degree program.

Racism conference brought people together

AKRON, Pa.—Despite reports indicating otherwise, the United Nations Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, successfully connected disenfranchised people, say Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. staff members who attended the Aug. 31-Sept. 7 event.

"Oppressed people from all over the world were there, and they were meeting each other and finally speaking for themselves," says Iris de Leon-Hartshorn, director of MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries.

While the MCC U.S. workers sensed the U.S. delegation's reluctance to discuss reparations for slavery, they also witnessed Africans and African descendants attempting to bridge gaps in communication and work toward solutions. Conrad Moore, co-director of the MCC U.S. Damascus Road anti-racism program, said discussions focused on debt relief for struggling African nations and recognition of slavery as a "crime against humanity."—*MCC News Service*

Virginia relief sale sets record for income

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale Oct. 5-6 raised $216,000 for Mennonite Central Committee, a record high for the 35-year-old event and $42,000 more than last year's sale.

The auction of quilts, comforters and wall hangings generated nearly $92,000. A wall hanging to be sent to Mennonite congregations in New York City as a sign of solidarity was sold for $6,300. The money from the wall hanging will go to Mennonite Disaster Service for its counseling program for victims of the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Also sold during the sale were about 15,000 homemade donuts, 125 gallons of Brunswick stew, 3,000 barbecued chicken halves and 5,000 quarts of homemade apple butter.—*Jim Bishop*

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Births

Arnold, Max Thomas, Sept. 18, to Natasha Deckert and Scott Arnold, Newton, Kan.

Bailey, Spencer Douglas, Sept. 18, to Douglas and Donna Zimmerman Bailey, Wauseon, Ohio.

Conwell, Grace Ann and Tanner Le (twins), Sept. 15, to Jim and Tina Brooks Conwell, Wayland, Iowa.

Cressman, Benjamin Isaac, Sept. 12, to Erik Cressman and Lisa Kraske, Indianapolis.

Friesen, Aaron Gottfried, Aug. 6, to Karl and Rachel Klassen Friesen, Hesston, Kan.

Gingerich, Ezra Nathaniel, Aug. 23, to Blaine and Jodie Rudolph Gingerich, Kouts, Ind.

Greaser, Caroline Brunk, Aug. 15, to Alan Greaser and Jeannie Brunk, Ashland, Va.

King, David Lawrence, Sept. 18, to Bradley and Stacy Curtis King, Valparaiso, Ind.

Kratz, Timothy David, Sept. 15, to David Kratz and Karen Groller, Souderton, Pa.

Miller, Haley Brooke, Sept. 14, to Matthew and Michelle Loss Miller, Cincinnati.

Reseto, Emma Julianna, Sept. 16, to Anthony and Stephanie Blough Resto, Broadway, Va.

Rogers, Bailey Joy, Sept. 12, to Clint and Monica Rogers, Armington, Ill.

Rupp, Sierra Lynne, Sept. 17, to Jeff and Becky Wyse Rupp, Wauseon, Ohio.

Marriages

Beesley/Franz: Deborah Beesley, Stromsburg, Neb., and Lowell Franz, Henderson, Neb., Sept. 7 at Stromsburg.

Ediger/Regier: Valerie Ediger, Henderson, Neb., and Andrew Regier, Henderson, Sept. 22 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Gray/Steiner: David Gray, Singers Glen, Va., and Cecilia (Ceci) Steiner, Harrisonburg, Va., Sept. 22.

Kulp/Stewart: Jon Kulp, Quakertown, Pa., and Melissa Stewart, Quakertown, Sept. 15 at Quakertown.

Deaths

Freeburg, Verne A., 85, Great Bend, Kan., died Sept. 1. Spouse: Laura Mae Unruh Freeburg. Parents: David and Agnes Sjogren Freeburg (deceased). Other survivors: children Sandra Darcy, Patricia Hankin; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Great Bend.

Froese, Letha Marie Evers, 81, Cheraw, Colo., died July 6. Spouse: Harry Froese. Other survivors: children Marcia Beachy, David, Kathleen Froese, Ann Froese-Fretz, Kevin, Julia, Lori; 16 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: July 10 at East Holbrook Mennonite Church, Cheraw.

Jantzi, Donald D., 83, Goshen, Ind., died July 31. Spouse: Doris Schaefer Jantzi. Parents: Michael and Alma Zehr Jantzi (deceased). Other survivors: children Cynthia Bell, Barbara McFall, Carol Montgomery, Glenda Hooley, Lowell, Donald; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 4 at East Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Lawler, Maryann B. Wedel, 82, Reedley, Calif., died Aug. 28. Spouse: Maurice Lawler. Parents: Peter and Emma Wedel (deceased). Other survivors: children Monty, Merle, Mark; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: Sept. 4 at Sierra View Homes, Reedley.

Louden, M. Ruth Myers, 96, Lancaster, Pa., died Sept. 14. Spouse: Albert D. Louden (deceased). Parents: William and Emma Martin Myers (deceased). Survivors: daughter Virginia Stauffer; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 18 at Mennonite Home Chapel, Lancaster.

Moyer, Wilmer R., 75, Bechtelsville, Pa., died Sept. 13. Spouse: Ruth Stapleton Moyer. Parents: LeRoy and Erna Moyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Michael, Lois Fronheiser; four grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 18 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Penner, Gertrude Fast, 92, Beatrice, Neb., died Sept. 13. Spouse: Louis B. Penner. Parents: Gerhard and Helene Andreas Fast (deceased). Other survivors: children Harold, Marilyn Epp; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 17 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Siebert, Clayton, 98, Kitchener, Ont., died Sept. 11. Spouse: Mabel Weber Siebert (deceased). Parents: Edward and Wilhelmina Siebert (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret Hoffmann, Joyce Rooney, Sharon; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 14 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Thomas, Ella, 65, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 9. Parents: Samuel D. and Lizzie Yoder Thomas (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 12 at North Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Dorothy King, 83, Hesston, Kan., died Sept. 19. Spouse: Mervin Troyer. Parents: Henry and Anna Hartzler King (deceased). Other survivors: children Elnor Stutzman, Ronald, Donald; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Schowalter Villa, Hesston.

Yoder, Anna Bontrager, 97, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Sept. 4. Spouse: Fred R. Yoder (deceased). Memorial service: Sept. 8 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Zook, Mary Kurtz, 80, McVeytown, Pa., died Sept. 13. Spouse: Jesse M. Zook (deceased). Parents: Enos and Mary Kurtz (deceased). Survivors: children Lena Lakjer, Floyd, Marlin, John, Mary Banker, Kathryn Breon, Alan; 21 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 16 at Valley View Amish Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

classifieds

- **Kauffman Museum traveling exhibits** on Anabaptist themes available for viewing in churches, schools and museums: ***The Mirror of the Martyrs; Menno Simons: Image, Art and Identity; When Disaster Strikes: The Story of MDS***.

  Contact Kauffman Museum, Bethel College, 316-283-1612; <kauffman@bethelks.edu>; <www.bethelks.edu/kauffman>.

- **Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks two full-time/year-round positions: ***program director*** and ***maintenance person***. Both open immediately.

  For further information, contact Doc Johnson at 815-646-4344 or <doc@mennohaven.com>.

- **Messiah College's** Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan Studies is sponsoring an undergraduate ***research/writing competition*** in Anabaptist studies, ***deadline Jan. 10, 2002***. Undergraduates or recent college graduates are invited to submit papers addressing Anabaptist subjects, contemporary or historical. Disciplinary possibilities include sociology, history, theology, political science, economics, communications, philosophy, literature, women's studies, etc. Awards are $500, $300 and $200, respectively.

  For submission guidelines, contact David Weaver-Zercher, The Sider Institute, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027; email <dzercher@messiah.edu>; or visit <www.messiah.edu/siderinstitute> (click on "News & Events").

- **Living Hope Christian Fellowship** seeks a ***pastor of Mandarin ministries***. We are a young, vibrant, growing Mandarin congregation of about 70 in Whiterock, B.C. Most of our regular attendees are new Christians or seekers. We hope to fill this position by mid-2002. Qualifications: committed disciple of Jesus Christ, gifted in biblical preaching and relationship-building, bilingual in Mandarin and English, a graduate of a biblical seminary and in agreement with the Confession of Faith in A Mennonite Perspective, experienced in ministry.

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- **Perryton Mennonite Church**, a loving, caring congregation in the rural Texas Panhandle, is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Opportunities for growth and outreach. Interested people may contact Doug at 806-435-4558 or <ptnmenno@hotmail.com>.

- **A new scholarship**, the Dwight Moody Wiebe Endowment Fund, is now ***available to former Mennonite Central Committee volunteers*** who are enrolled in graduate programs. The scholarship was established by Margot Wiebe of Dallas, Texas, in memory of her husband, Dwight Moody Wiebe, who died in January 2000. Dwight Wiebe served with MCC during the 1950s, including four years as Europe director of MCC's Pax program for alternative military service. A minimum of $250 is available to candidates who fulfill each of the following requirements: (1) applicant has completed an assignment with MCC of at least two years; (2) applicant is actively enrolled in an accredited graduate school; (3) applicant completed his or her term with MCC no more than three years before enrolling in graduate school. Application deadline: Oct. 31, 2001.

  For information or to apply, contact Carol Eby-Good, 1-888-563-4676; <ceg@mcc.org>.

- **Camp Friedenswald**, Cassopolis, Mich., seeks a full-time ***guest group coordinator/administrative assistant*** who desires to work in Christian camping, enjoys meeting and working with people, and has exceptional organizational and time management skills. This person is usually the first and last person to meet campers, works closely with the executive director, plus program, outdoor education and food service staff. Responsibilities include booking and scheduling camp usage, clerical management of the office, answering the phone and managing the camp store. Qualifications include active Christian life that embraces the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith, resonating with the ministry of camp, ability to relate to a wide variety of ages and people, and office, computer, organizational and time management skills. Benefits include salary, housing, meals, health insurance and retirement plan.

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- **Eastern Mennonite University** invites applications for a full-time faculty position in a master's degree program in ***counselor education*** with school and community counseling tracks, beginning fall 2002. The role includes director responsibilities. Doctorate in counselor education and Virginia LPC required. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of excellence in teaching in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, practice and teamwork, and who are supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

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lture mediaculture mediaculture

by Gordon Houser

The Sept. 11 attack has changed all of us. As we sort out the way ahead and struggle with how or whether to get back to some kind of normalcy, we encounter a mediaculture in turmoil as well.

The sports world responded. Major League Baseball and the National Football League canceled games and decided to prolong their seasons by a week in order to make them up. Soccer, NASCAR, basketball and other sports also canceled events.

Some movies were withheld from release, at least temporarily, including *Collateral Damage*, an Arnold Schwarzenegger picture in which a skyscraper is bombed. This summer I saw a trailer for next summer's Spider Man movie, which included a scene involving the World Trade Center (WTC) towers. Martial-arts actor Jackie Chan was scheduled to film a scene from an upcoming movie on top of one tower on the morning of Sept. 11, but the scene was delayed because the script wasn't ready.

One discussion in pop culture was how soon comedy could be performed. Pundits explored new meanings of "good taste."

Meanwhile, people are going to places of worship—churches, mosques, temples—in greater numbers. And there are the ubiquitous flags and red, white and blue ribbons, while "God Bless America" and other patriotic songs fill the airwaves. In such a time of uncertainty, people seem to be drawn to reassuring symbols, such as the flag, that offer them a semblance of certainty or control.

It will be some time before artwork reflecting on this event emerges. One simple yet powerful piece is the cover of the Sept. 24 issue of *The New Yorker*, "9/11/01" by Art Spiegelman. What seems a plain black cover on closer inspection reveals in shadow the WTC twin towers.

Also in that issue are observations by well-known writers, stunning photography and a piece by Anthony Lane, "This Is Not a Movie."

Like others watching TV coverage of the attack's aftermath, I heard a rescue worker say: "It's like *The Planet of the Apes* or something. Bodies everywhere." Others made comparisons of the event to other movies, such as *Independence Day*, *Die Hard* or *Armageddon*.

Lane points out the similarity between what is being said and the script of a 1998 movie, *The Siege*, in which terrorists set off bombs in New York City.

Even the length of time between when the first plane struck the north WTC tower and when that tower collapsed was about 100 minutes, the length of an average movie.

Those used to watching such explosions in the safety of a theater waited for a return to reality. But this awful event, which looked like a movie, was reality.

For others, however, it had a different resonance. Older Britons might say, "It's like the Blitz." Germans might say, "It's like Dresden."

Elsewhere in that issue of *The New Yorker*, novelist Denis Johnson, who has traveled in the Third World, including Afghanistan, writes: "I have now seen two days of war in the biggest city in America. But imagine a succession of such days stretching into years—years in which explosions bring down all the great buildings, until the last one goes. ... Imagine the people who have already seen years like these turn into decades—imagine their brief lifetimes made up only of days like these we've just seen in New York."

We have been living in a different world.

books

Jewish Spirituality: A Brief Introduction for Christians by Lawrence Kushner (Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001, $12.95) is a reader-friendly, ecumenical attempt to distill the essence of Jewish spirituality, which Kushner calls "religion experienced intimately." This popular writer-rabbi begins with the assumption that "everything, from prayers to garbage, is a manifestation of God." Kushner overturns stereotypes of legalistic Jewish laws with his descriptions of Jewish spirituality: "[It] invites us to wake up and open our eyes to the myriad beautiful, mysterious and holy things happening all around us every day." He writes that Jewish spirituality is "eminently practical, even behaviorist: When you see something that is broken, fix it." While Kushner makes some comments about Christianity we will quibble with (e.g., that it is other-worldly), the tone is pacific. He offers more of a taste than a meal, but it's appetizing.

Praying the Psalms: A Commentary by Stanley L. Jaki (Eerdmans, 2001, $16) is a mixture of scholarly and devotional attention to the biblical psalms. According to the dust jacket, "Jaki has recited all 150 psalms once every week for the past 60 years." This does not make him an expert, but it does show his familiarity with and passion for the Psalms. He writes, "The psalms illuminate the mind for the purpose of enkindling the soul, indeed to put it on fire." Jaki includes helpful insights, but he digresses into diatribes that sound anti-Jewish at times, anti-democratic at others. His whining tone detracts from a true analysis, and his tangents finally ruin a promising beginning.

videos

Wit (PG-13), based on a Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Margaret Edson, concerns the impending death from ovarian cancer of a literature scholar. Intelligent, funny, sad and ultimately hopeful, *Wit* shows the limitations of pursuing knowledge at the expense of one's humanity. The climactic scene is a moving evocation of God's love as one approaches death.

films

Hearts in Atlantis (PG-13), based on a Stephen King story, is a nostalgic, coming-of-age tale set in 1960. An old man with psychic powers (Anthony Hopkins) befriends an 11-year-old boy and teaches him to overcome fear. Good acting and a solid screenplay help it avoid sentimentality. The film shows the power of affirmation in children's lives.

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Everett J. Thomas

Singing, the prayers we breathe

In conversations with other Christians, Mennonites are often viewed with appreciation for the convictions and practices that make us distinctive. In ecumenical discussions about stewardship or mission or service, we are respected as a people of integrity and intentionality. And these days, of course, some other Christians especially wish to hear about our convictions related to pacifism. But now it appears that Mennonites are developing another distinction in Christian circles. This time, it is our singing that is drawing attention.

In some circles, Mennonite singing is considered a special gift to the broader Christian church. One scholar musician goes so far as to say that Mennonites establish the key in which the rest of the Christian world sings. John L. Bell, a leader in the Iona community in Glasgow, Scotland, provides the foreword to *Singing: A Mennonite Voice*, by Marlene Kropf and Kenneth Nafziger (Herald Press, 2001).

"If an object were required to symbolize the Mennonite tradition," says Bell, "I would keenly suggest the pitch pipe … because it enables the church to sing. And that, in brief, may well be the necessary vocation of Mennonites within the holy catholic church in the twenty-first century."

More important, however, than the way we are viewed by other Christians is the corporate bonding that creates community as we listen to each other's songs. Offering our songs to one another, we hear each other's voices.

There is something about music, whether sacred or secular, that is eminently personal. In Mennonite circles we may argue at times about which songs to use, but singing is still the tie that binds us together. By learning to accept each other's preferences and eventually singing off the same page, individual tastes are subordinated to the needs of the community of faith in worship.

In Mennonite circles we may argue at times about which songs to use, but singing is still the tie that binds us together.

"Ultimately, it is an act of hospitality to learn one another's songs," write Kropf and Nafziger. "We find communal space when, in unexpected ways and places, 'they know my song' or 'I know their song.' "

The ability to create this communal space is a special characteristic of the Mennonite tradition. Indeed, we would be hard pressed to figure out whether our great singing is the result of the bonds we feel in community or whether it is the singing that creates the bonds of community.

Recently, advances in sound equipment have introduced more recorded music into congregational life (see chart below). Presumably such recordings are used for accompaniment or prelude music. However, if recorded music begins to replace congregational singing, then this trend is a bigger threat to corporate life than arguments over what we sing.

The sound of the human voice is the most important element of Mennonite worship. As many have said, singing is the way Mennonites pray. Praying in this way, the congregation breathes together.

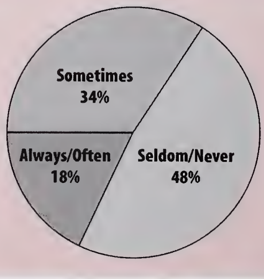
The ability to sing together is a gift of God's Spirit that we must manage with great care. It is not just about getting others to sing the songs we prefer or weeding out music we consider substandard. Indeed, the anecdotal evidence provided by Kropf and Nafziger reveals that most Mennonites can sing songs that others like, even if those particular songs are not to their liking.

The ability to breathe our prayers together through singing is a gift as delicate and fragile as the bonds of unity. The way to treasure this gift is to teach our children why we sing and to embrace each other's songs.

The pitch pipe signals that it is the singing as much as it is the song. Let us help the world to sing.—*ejt*

Mennonite Church USA
Congregational Life

How often is recorded music (tapes, CDs, etc.) included in your congregation's regular worship services?



Source: Faith Communities Today (FACT)

the Mennonite

October 23, 2001

God bless America?

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Respectful disagreement?

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will renounce the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared with a hot iron." With these words from 1 Timothy 4:1-2, Paul commits the apparent sin denounced by Everett Thomas in his editorial "Killing Them Softly" (Sept. 11). It's not just this one place—passages like this are peppered throughout the Pauline letters. What's worse is that Jesus does it, too. Witness the nasty names in Matthew 23, such as vipers, whitewashed tombs and sons of hell. In light of such passages, Thomas' doctrine of respectful disagreement either represents a revolutionary moral advance over Christ and his apostles or a misunderstanding and a profound loss.

Part of that loss is reflected in Thomas' words, "I am not sure that I can trust the church to talk about abortion yet." The church has productively been talking about abortion for a little less than two millennia. Witness the Epistle of Barnabas, "You shall not murder a child by abortion." The people in the Bible knew how to be gentle and knew very well how to stand for the truth. Those slain in the *Martyr's Mirror* answered their killers without hate and plainly denounced wrong. The church in Christ's day would have died if people thought "Love your neighbor" meant, "Tolerate more and more views." So will our church die if we do not choose to end a well disguised nightmare. Look around the denominational landscape in America and see if you can find a single church that has held that view for 50 years and still has a living faith.—*Jonathan Hayward, Wheaton, Ill.*

I want to applaud Everett Thomas' Sept. 11 editorial. What he lifts up is so true. We believe in peacemaking, but it is a lot easier overseas. It is really hard to put it into practice when it involves our attitudes, our words and our actions here at home. He is to be highly commended for calling us to accountability in this area of our lives.—*Marlin Thomas, Milford, Neb.*

Prayer for mercy

Thank you for printing "Caught Between Two Sides" by Ann Minter Fetters (Sept. 11). It was an excellent example of being in the world but not of the world. It also spoke to the verbal violence that takes place among believers as we discuss hot topics. Hopefully the trepidation Everett Thomas expresses in his editorial will be for naught. It is my prayer that we all can show each other a little more mercy as Christ would have done.—*Geneva Thoman, West Liberty, Ohio*

Not a race issue

I read with amazement how Tobin Miller Shearer made the comments of a publicly grieving man into his issue ("An Open Letter to Alex Chadwick of National Public Radio," Sept. 25). Alex Chadwick did not say, "This country has changed. … We [white middle-class people] are no longer safe" (my brackets). I believe Chadwick meant all Americans: white Americans, African-Americans, Native Americans, Arab-Americans, even the visitors to America that were from one of the 80 countries represented in the World Trade Center.

I appreciate Shearer's hypersensitivity to racism issues. Unfortunately he is not able to see this opportunity for us—God's children of all ethnicities—to grieve together, to comfort each other and to show love and compassion to each other after this great tragedy. Shearer's attempt to make this a race issue is as offensive as the racism that he has admirably fought in the past.—*H. Jeffrey Wilkins, Sellersville, Pa.*

The Lord's words

Harley Hofstetter writes in the Oct. 2 Readers Say, "To raise the standard for entrance into the Mennonite denomination above that which is required of the Christian church makes us elitist and squarely in the camp of the Pharisees." I beg to differ. The baptismal services of Jan. 21, 1525, in Zurich marked the birthing of a Believers' Church that then asked, and continues to ask, for literal obedience to biblical principles such as nonresistance and the ways of peace. Now, as then, this standard may differ from that held by other Christian denominations. Does my observance of these standards make me a Pharisee? I think not. Neither does my subscribing to these standards while others choose not to make me judgmental. I am not judging their position, while I am also not apologizing for mine.

Another Hofstetter quote, "But to enforce our particular method of what we think is right on everyone else is a type of thinking of which cults are composed." I do not feel that our beliefs are being forced on others. But neither should we be apologetic for the standards that Christ instituted. 2 Timothy 1:8 says, "So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord"

theMennonite

Vol. 4, No. 40, October 23, 2001

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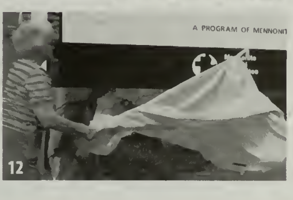

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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ay readers say

(NIV). The standards that we continually work at maintaining are not ours. They are the words of Christ. Shall we take away from them?—*Flo Horning, Ephrata, Pa.*

Do the math

I am a student in the mathematical modeling course this semester at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa. We recently examined "Not a Level Playing Field" (Aug. 21) for its mathematical soundness. Before I reveal the results of our research, I would like to compliment *The Mennonite* on being bold enough to include some substantial mathematical thinking in its pages. It is not often that one sees mathematical ideas in a Christian periodical.

We analyzed the article in groups of two or three students and used computers to simulate each of the three probabilistic situations posed by Frederic de Coninck in support of his argument for the Jubilee laws. Our analysis of the coin game found that the less wealthy player will be bankrupt 45 percent of the time in a game with six flips. However, if the number of flips per game is increased to 10, then the less wealthy player will be bankrupt 55 percent of the time. De Coninck's assertion that the wealthier player will be bankrupt about one time out of 1,000 also holds true for a game with 10 flips. The actual probability is 1/1024. We found no errors in de Coninck's bankruptcy rates for ancient Israeli farmers, using the assumptions and data in his article.

We suspect that the errors in the exposition of the game were not due to de Coninck's lack of mathematical rigor. It is more likely that this paragraph was translated inaccurately. We hope that our exposure of these errors will not discourage more good mathematics in *The Mennonite* in the future.—*Nicholas Zoller, Grantham, Pa.*

**Cover photo
by Skjold Photographs**

One month later

I abhor the tendency of many to wrap their racial or religious prejudices in the American flag and call it patriotism. But I also abhor the tendency of some, such as John D. Roth ("Mennonite Responses to the Sept. 11 Tragedy," Sept. 25), to lay blame entirely on the United States. These were blind, senseless acts, devoid of reason. The perpetrators who committed these acts did so with the same mindset as one who would throw a cinder block off an overpass and into the windshield of an innocent motorist. The reasoning behind the attacks is largely unreasoned, the motivation fundamentally flawed.

Tell the relatives of the thousands of victims that their loved ones died because the United States is a symbol of evil. Tell them that it was an act of "retributive justice," and I fear you might be called many things, but not a peacemaker.

We have been attacked. We must work to prevent further senseless attacks. We must increase our security measures. We must seek out and bring to justice if possible or destroy if necessary those who would commit such terrible, murderous and senseless acts. We may continue to work with all our might and the blessings of God toward a lasting and just peace with all who would respond to reason. But those who would senselessly and blindly destroy us, we must respond with an enforced peace.

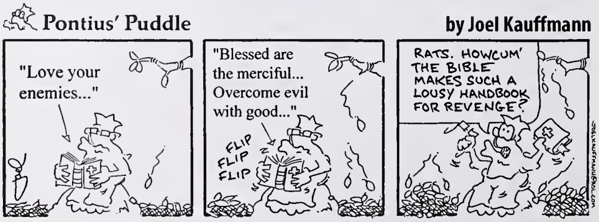
We must acknowledge the right of our government to defend its citizens and seek justice. As followers of Christ, we must also seek peace and understanding, not vengeance, and continue to do our best to ensure our government's response is just, reasoned and proper. —*Sam J. Sullenberger, West Liberty, Ohio*

No act of violence ... takes place in a vacuum. The seeds of hatred that gave rise to these events were sown, no doubt, long ago.

—*John D. Roth, "Mennonite Responses to the Sept. 11 Tragedy," Sept. 25*

We see the destruction of the World Trade Center as a loathful act of terrorism. But what motivated the terrorists? Osama bin Laden in 1998 printed a "Declaration of the World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and the Crusaders." He mentions several times the war with Iraq. We continue to blockade and humiliate that country and force starvation on its citizens. It may be reasonable to us in our fear and anxiety, but to the Arab and Muslim it is humiliation. Thus we provide the terrorist with a reason to act. Islamic law states that when enemies attack Arab lands, "jihad" becomes the duty of every Muslim. Revenge germinates a basis for terrorism to act even in suicide. —*Meryl Grasse, Calico Rock, Ark.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


"Love your enemies..."
"Blessed are the merciful... Overcome evil with good..."
FLIP FLIP FLIP
RATS. HOWCUM' THE BIBLE MAKES SUCH A LOUSY HANDBOOK FOR REVENGE?
JOELKAUFFMANN@AOL.COM

Paul the apostle was not always the Christian church leader we have come to know. He writes: "I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 1:13-14). Paul was "ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women" to jail. He was "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 8:3; 9:1).

After Paul's life was changed by his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, the Lord designated him "my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings, and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15, NIV).

What if Paul had been hunted down and killed by the disciples of the Lord because he was terrorizing them? Could he have met the risen Lord on the road to Damascus? Could he have become God's chosen instrument?

Does God still do miracles? Is it possible that a terrorist today could be changed and become God's chosen instrument for doing good? What might happen if, instead of stirring up hate, all Christians of the world would surround Osama bin Laden and his associates with prayers of love?

Jesus taught us: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:44-45). On the cross Jesus prayed for his torturers and killers: "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). Please join us in prayer for all the leaders of the world.—*Beaverdam Mennonite Church, Corry, Pa.*

Just as everyone else, I was shocked and saddened by the events of Sept. 11. Our congregation held a special service the next Sunday to pray for the victims, their families, rescue workers, our national leaders, in addition to the families of the terrorists. Two members of our congregation work in the airline industry and were deeply affected by the tragedy. We also prayed for our local, national and worldwide Muslim brothers and sisters, peaceful people just as shocked by these events as we are.—*Minka van der Zwaag, Sunnyvale, Calif.*

Does God bless America?

And which God do we mean when we sing the song?

by Donald B. Kraybill

In the aftermath of the terrible events of Sept. 11, God has suddenly become popular. In every city, village and hamlet across the land, bumper stickers, marquee signs and banners proclaim, "God Bless America." At sporting events, political gatherings, worship services and civic meetings, everyone is singing "God Bless America," our new national anthem.

How does God bless America? What do we mean by this phrase that has united the lips and hearts of so many?

For some it is a prayer of affirmation that welcomes God's smile upon the land of the free and the brave. For others the blessing is a recognition that God endorses and supports our military ventures.

The phrase can also be a plea for divine blessing: "Please, Lord God, give us your OK."

From campfire circles to civic parades, the words may also be an invitation for spiritual guidance—pleading for God to help us find our way in these dark days. Or perhaps we are thinking of protection, imploring God to protect us from future terrorist attacks.

And I suspect that for many, especially in recent days, it is a cry to aid the suffering, beseeching God to comfort those pained by injury, loss or ethnic profiling.

Regardless of its meaning, the phrase has evoked some of our deepest emotions that blend God and country together.

Divine sanction: In some ways the words "God bless America" are packed with meaning. To receive God's blessing is the ultimate congratulation, filled with divine sanction and solidarity. We surely cannot find a higher, better blessing.

But in other ways it is an empty slogan that we fill with any meaning. What do we mean by "bless"? Do we mean the people? The government? Are we asking for warm heavenly fuzzies or truly seeking divine guidance?

The bland meaning easily invites distortion. It can become idolatrous if we use the phrase to justify anything our nation does. When that happens, "God" shrinks to a socially constructed puppet who merely reflects our fears and feelings.

A tribal god smiles favorably on everything its nation does. When god becomes a national mascot, god cheers military action in the name of justice or anything else that is politically expedient.

And while it may feel good and reassuring to us to believe that we are God's pet nation, other countries have their own tribal gods cheering them on as well. Thus a multitude of wars turn into "holy" conflicts with tribal gods applauding on both sides of the trenches.

National idolatry: Peoples and nations alike hunger for divine approval and blessing, and those inclinations easily lead to national idolatry in the name of god.

In these times when public piety is surging, Christians must be careful to distinguish between the god of American civil religion and the God revealed in Jesus of Nazareth.

The God of the New Testament Jesus sends the rain on the just and the unjust. This God urges us to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us, to render to no one evil for evil and to leave vengeance to divine hands. This God teaches us to forgive 70 times seven and even on the cross, in the midst of torture, at the hands of terrorists, said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

A tribal god smiles favorably on everything its nation does. When god becomes a national mascot, god cheers military action in the name of justice or anything else that is politically expedient.

The God of the Christian faith "so loved the entire world" that he sought to redeem it. For this God there is no east and west, no political borders, no pet nations. The kingdom of this God is a global family that transcends national boundaries.

This is the God who blesses the poor in spirit, the outcasts, the stigmatized, the impoverished and those who suffer. This is the God who walks in the valley of the shadow of death with all who are traumatized with fear.

Is this the God we worship when we sing "God Bless America," or is it a tribal god, the golden calf of American nationalism?

Donald B. Kraybill lives in Elizabethtown, Pa., and is the author of Our Star Spangled Faith *and* The Upside-Down Kingdom *(Herald Press). This article first appeared in the* Lancaster *(Pa.)* Sunday News.

Lessons of history

Our nation's leaders and others revise history in order to support war.

by Perry Bush

Humorist Dave Barry recently wrote: "I'm not naive about my country. My country has sometimes been terribly wrong. But I know this about Americans: We don't set out to kill innocent people. We don't cheer when innocent people die."

Barry needs a history lesson. American history has shown repeatedly that eras of war mobilization are dangerous times of ideological revisioning. A brief review of such eras shows this and provides important lessons for people committed to a just peace.

Before American entry into World War I there was widespread confusion and dissent here about whether the country should become involved in the war. Many people then—and historians today—questioned whether U.S. security was really in danger in that conflict. They wondered why economic interests such as the banking and armaments industries were taking the lead in pushing U.S. entry into the war. The nation witnessed a prolonged and agonizing congressional debate over American participation in the war, with more than 50 congresspeople voting against the war resolution.

Holy war: President Wilson so draped the war cause with the flag and patriotism that he effectively transformed a confusing debate about free trade rights into the closest the country has ever come to a holy war. This crusade levied such a toll on American civil liberties that it changed the nation into something close to a police state.

A similar process occurred during World War II. President Roosevelt initially downplayed ethnic hate-mongering and made no grand promises about making a world safe for democracy. Instead he produced the alluring vision of the "Four Freedoms."

Polling data done during the war revealed widespread confusion about U.S. war aims. For large numbers of Americans, World War II had little to do with the Four Freedoms or saving the world's Jews. Instead it was principally a war of vengeance, devoted to the complete destruction of the Japanese.

We don't set out to kill innocent people, Mr. Pitts? In a single night of bombing on March 10, 1945, the U.S. Army Air Corps dropped enough incendiary bombs to burn alive more than 100,000 Japanese, most of them civilians, in a densely populated, working-class section of Tokyo. By the end of the war that August, additional U.S. bombing attacks killed upwards of a million people and obliterated 66 of Japan's largest cities. "We don't cheer when innocent people die"? *Time* editorialized gleefully that the Tokyo bombing demonstrated that "properly kindled, Japanese cities will burn like autumn leaves."

The point here is not Dave Barry's deficiencies as a historian but to show the purposes comments like his serve. We are now faced with another government revving up the ideological engines for war. Our state is constructing vast moral absolutes to legitimize its actions. It is hard to locate any American politician, Republican or Democrat, who isn't grabbing the nearest microphone and making sweeping, black-and-white moral platitudes of America as the aggrieved innocent, "America under attack" by crazed terrorists who commit heinous acts only because they hate our freedom and democracy.

Nothing here should be construed as saying the victims in New York and Washington somehow deserved their fate or that the nation had it coming. We are people of peace and justice, and we must agree that the perpetrators of this wretched crime must be found and held accountable.

People of peace: At the same time, as in other conflicts, as people of peace we must recognize the moral ambiguities inherent in this situation. There's the uncomfortable fact that our government trained terrorists such as bin Laden and bankrolled terrorist states such as Iraq, then issued not one word of moral condemnation as long as they directed their atrocities against our enemies, such as Iran or the Soviet Union.

Even many rational people in the Middle East today have valid reasons to hate and fear the United States: for its punitive sanctions against Iraq that have cost the lives of 500,000 Iraqi civilians, or for the decades of uncritical U.S. support of an increasingly brutal Israeli occupation of the West Bank of Palestine.

As people of peace, we must remember the lessons history leaves us. In other eras when the nation turned to simplistic moral platitudes to rationalize war, things often turned out bad.

Maybe the basic lesson here was best stated by Civil War historian Bruce Catton: "A singular fact about modern war is that it takes charge. Once begun, it has to be carried to its conclusion, and carrying it there sets in motion events that may be beyond men's control. Doing what has to be done to win, men perform acts that alter the very soil in which society's roots are nourished."

As people of peace, we must remember the lessons history leaves us. In other eras when the nation turned to simplistic moral platitudes to rationalize war, things often turned out bad.

Perry Bush is professor of history at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

Neighbors around the table

Mennonites in Pennsylvania reach out to Muslim neighbors.

by Krista Weidner

On the evening of Sept. 26 in State College, Pa., more than 130 Christian and Muslim neighbors gathered around tables for a picnic and fellowship at a local park. In the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the rhetoric of war and hate that followed, David B. Miller, pastor of University Mennonite Church (UMC), felt called to reach out in peace to Muslims in the State College and Penn State University (PSU) community.

"Too often, those of us with convictions about peacemaking tend to retreat when there's a call to arms," he says. "We believe there's nothing we can do. I want to say, no, there are nonviolent alternatives we can offer. We wanted to have this picnic as a concrete way to demonstrate the fruit of reconciliation."

UMC and the Interfaith Coalition against Violence and Prejudice hosted members of the PSU Muslim Student Association and the Islamic Society of Central Pennsylvania. Ibrahim Ibrahim, past president of the Islamic Society, and Abdullah Yavas, adviser to the Muslim Student Association, expressed appreciation for the opportunity to interact and build relationships with Christian neighbors. "We have learned the lessons," said Ibrahim. "Experience has shown us that reacting with violence only leads to more violence. When we call for peace, we are not any less patriotic than those who are calling for war."

After David offered a prayer to bless the meal, Ibrahim shared a traditional Islamic prayer from the Quran. Then David encouraged those in attendance to mingle: "We are neighbors in this community. Tonight get to know your neighbors around the table." The diverse group—Christians and Muslims, college students and families with children, couples and singles—followed his advice.

Baba ganouj: Middle Eastern dishes such as taboule and baba ganouj took their place alongside American potato chips and broccoli-cheese casserole. On the dessert table, beside a tray of baklava, a PSU blue-and-white cake read, "United we stand."

Shield Photographs (for illustration only)

During the meal, David asked Ramy, a Muslim PSU student, to share with the group about the atmosphere on campus since the terrorist attacks. Although no serious acts of violence have been committed against Middle Eastern students at Penn State, he said, there have been some incidents of harsh words, hateful emails and occasional spitting. Ramy conveyed his appreciation for the gathering and for expressions of concern and support.

Although the picnic was slated to end at sunset, many seemed reluctant to pack up and leave. As the sun sank behind the central Pennsylvania hills, a group of Muslims moved away from the crowd and faced east, toward Mecca, for evening prayers. Adults lingered under darkening skies, nibbling on the last bits of dessert and chatting, as light- and dark-skinned faces of the children darted around the playground.

Hachim, a PSU premed student from Syria, surveyed the scene and said, "Wouldn't it be great if this sort of thing started happening all over the country?"

Atom's weight: Ibrahim called the event "an excellent act of compassion, understanding and courage. This sets an example for all of us as to what we need to do in the face of such troubled times," he said. "Allah has said, 'Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it.' This picnic was definitely an act of good that we appreciate and that he will reward."

David sees the gathering as a small but significant act of peacemaking. "When we met with Ibrahim to plan this event, he shared that he had talked on the phone with a friend in Saudi Arabia, telling him about our plans. So this event in State College has had an international impact already. What if every Muslim in the United States could say, This is how Christians in this country have responded. And what if each of us Christians could say, This has been our experience with the Muslim community. I don't think it's overly idealistic to think we can change the world through person-to-person interactions. After all, aren't the logic and power of terrorism defeated when we refuse the world they seek to create?"

Krista Weidner is a member of University Mennonite Church, State College, Pa.

What if every Muslim in the United States could say, This is how Christians in this country have responded. And what if each of us Christians could say, This has been our experience with the Muslim community.

More responses to September 11

Excerpts from responses by our readers

As residents of New York City and as members of this community we continue to witness the horrors of Sept. 11 and have been changed by that day. Bearing the burden of such violence heightens our awareness that violence of any kind is extremely painful and violates our relationships with one another in the most fundamental ways. What does it mean to seek the shalom of the city and the world? We are struggling to choose love over fear as we learn to live in God's Kingdom. We oppose war even in this situation.*—Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship*

Witness to Jesus' love of the enemy (both the vengeful Roman and the stateless Zealot) is now the astounding, but demanded, work of recovering humanity. And the enemy is closer at hand than just a week ago.*—Richard D. Buterbaugh, assistant pastor, Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church*

The "twin towers" of Christian faith and ethics, the cross and resurrection, are invisible. I have heard no one speak about the potential impact of the resurrection or the cross on projected public policy and the ethics of retaliation. I have heard no mention of the centrality of forgiveness in the way we view the world as Christians and in the way we understand God. Talk about compassion and love has been replaced by preconceptions of justice. Justice is something that is "done," either by bringing the enemy to it or taking it to the enemy. It is not something that is lived daily (and historically) which, if it were so understood, would make it a viable hope for the future.*—Robert J. Suderman, executive secretary, Christian Witness Council, Mennonite Church Canada*

I do not believe I am "with the terrorists" just because I am protesting the war. I did not come to this position easily. When I was 17 years old, I joined the Navy, and I have a 12-year history of active duty and reserve time. I have a brother who retired from the Air Force after 25 years of service and another brother who is on disability because of an accident that happened while he was in the Air Force. As a Presbyterian I grew up in a nonpacifist home. I have studied Scripture, I have prayed, I have meditated, I have attended four different seminaries and listened, watched and learned. ... In my journey I have come to pacifism. I was not born to it.*—Jim Compton-Schmidt, Fresno, Calif.*

At Norris (Tenn.) Elementary School, the children were encouraged to express their feelings about this tragedy by drawing a picture. Both of my children, ages 6 and 7, drew a skyscraper with a plane crashing into it, fire coming out and little stick-figure people falling through the air. But there was an element of hope and of courage in both. The largest figure in my son's picture was holding onto a piece of building as it fell to the ground. A little bubble came out from the figure's head saying, "I am OK." For my daughter the focal point of her picture was on the ground. One large stick figure crouched over another smaller one. She explained it to me: "Here is the man who saved the lady's life by shielding her from the falling building with his body." In the days to come, may we also be so brave.*—Liz McGeachy, Norris, Tenn.*

The path of peace with justice demands risks. To make God and human relationships the foundation of our security means entrusting ourselves to a process of global demilitarization and democratization that we as Americans can influence, but not control.*—Brian D'Agostino, Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship*

I am reminded that Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Nazareth during one of the darkest periods in human history. They returned following the complete destruction of Sepphoris, a neighboring city of 60,000 a mere four miles north of Nazareth. As a young man, Jesus probably stood on the hilltops above Nazareth and contemplated the trampled paths of armies that the blood of his fellow countrymen still stained. As he contemplated his role as Messiah, certainly Jesus knew the way of the sword would be the most satisfying and successful with his embattled and oppressed people. Fortunately, for those of us looking for Jesus to light the way through another dark period, we don't have to ask what Jesus would do. ... We know what he did.*—Joel Kauffmann, Nazareth, Israel*

Peacemaking primer

- Listen to peacemaking songs and rhythms rather than being caught up in marching war songs and other songs filled with the mentality of patriotism's "just war."
- Sing relevant songs from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.
- Read peace stories and learn how people found peacemaking alternatives during earlier times of war.
- Make special connections with community people who have great physical, mental, social and/or spiritual needs.
- Support peace-based agency workers and sacrificially donate money to bring hope, faith and resources to refugees worldwide.

—Joanne Hess Siegrist, Bird in Hand, Pa.

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Bigger not better as Ohio delegates nix formation of 33,000-member Great Lakes area conference

BERNE, Ind.—A plan to create Mennonite Church USA's largest area conference out of four current conferences has been derailed because of concerns about the proposed entity's size and loss of congregational autonomy.

Delegates from Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences met in Berne Oct. 13 to vote on merging to form Great Lakes Conference. Central District (91 percent), Illinois (83 percent) and Indiana-Michigan (72 percent) approved the measure, but Ohio could muster only 54 percent support. A two-thirds vote was required from each conference for passage.

The new conference would have brought together 33,000 members in 255 congregations in seven states. That would have been nearly twice the size of Lancaster, currently the largest conference.

"We would like to vote yes on all kinds of things," said Ohio delegate Loreen Amstutz, "but somehow it wouldn't have to be so big."

The future of a regional merger is now unclear. "We had no contingency plan," said Central District moderator Kevin Farmwald. "But we know that the dialogue will continue."

Illinois moderator Tim Schrag, who led the meeting, told the delegates, "This particular process is not going to go forward." But he added that the vote "is not closing or presuming options for regional cooperation."

Concerns about size were held by more than just Ohio delegates. The merger plan called for dividing the conference into nine mission districts. "It adds another layer of organization," said Indiana-Michigan delegate Art Smoker.

He and others also said that Great Lakes would have had a diminished voice in the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC), since area conferences, regardless of their size, can send no more than three representatives.

"That is already a CLC question," said Jim Schrag, Mennonite Church USA executive director. "CLC will have to face it."

For Ohio delegates, concerns about size went even deeper, to the point of challenging the stereotype that General Conference Mennonite Church congregations want more congregational autonomy than Mennonite Church congregations.

The listening committee's report from a Sept. 15 Ohio delegate meeting noted a call for a more specific definition of mission but also a fear of losing congregational autonomy. "In other words, a call from the conference to be very clear, … yet don't tell us what to do and how to do it," the report said.

"There are congregations that do not want to move into a mission district that has authority over [them]," said Ohio moderator Allen Rutter. "We say we don't want this huge thing because we will lose intimacy and our closeness. … But we don't want to move into a mission district because we will lose our autonomy."

Another concern was conference authority and trust, particularly as they relate to disciplined congregations. Illinois and Indiana-Michigan each have two congregations under discipline because of their positions on homosexuality. Those four congregations are also part of Central District, where they remain members in good standing.

"Our delegates have heard some [disciplined] congregations … say they will agree to the [denominational] membership guidelines on homosexuality, but they don't quite trust it," Rutter said.

The journey to the Oct. 13 vote started 15 years ago when the four conferences formed the East Central States Inter-Mennonite Council. In 1998, they created an Integration Implementation Committee, then met together last year in Goshen, Ind., to first hear the committee's proposal.

Despite the vote on regional integration, all four conferences will be charter members of Mennonite Church USA. Meeting separately prior to the joint session on Oct. 13, Illinois delegates unanimously approved joining the new denomination as charter members. Indiana-Michigan and Ohio had previously taken similar action. Central District is automatically in, according to General Conference Mennonite Church polity, although the conference has taken a symbolic vote in support of Mennonite Church USA.

"I am not disheartened," former Central District moderator Janeen Bertsche Johnson told the delegates after the vote's result was announced. "I rejoice that we are all part of the same denomination and encouraged that we have caught a vision here for something more than we all are already."—*Everett J. Thomas*

Charter membership number still grows

Two more Mennonite Church (MC) area conferences have decided to become charter members of Mennonite Church USA when the new denomination takes effect Feb. 1, 2002.

The most recent addition is Illinois Conference, which unanimously approved charter membership on Oct. 13. A week earlier, Southeast Conference took a similar action with a 94 percent vote.

Illinois and Southeast bring to 10 the number of MC area conferences that have chosen charter membership in Mennonite Church USA.

Meanwhile, Lancaster Conference will become a provisional member, according to a statement from the bishop board released last month. "Although [Mennonite Church USA] will consider [Lancaster] a provisional member, we will continue to affirm that Lancaster Conference has not yet made a decision about membership in Mennonite Church USA," the statement said.

Lancaster joins Franklin and South Central as the only conferences so far that have opted for provisional status.

Five conferences have yet to take action. Those that don't by Feb. 1, 2002, will become provisional members.

MCC issues appeal for blankets and comforters as it increases assistance for Afghan refugees

MCC photo by Mark Beach

Mennonite Central Committee volunteer Alfredo Berg helps load a shipment of more than 12,600 comforters at the MCC East Coast Material Resources Center in Ephrata, Pa., on Oct 8. The comforters, for Afghan refugees, are scheduled to arrive in Iran by late November.

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) wants to blanket with love the increasing number of Afghans displaced by years of drought and internal war and now by U.S. military strikes.

More than 20,000 comforters for Afghan refugees are scheduled to be shipped to Iran from Pennsylvania and British Columbia. The comforters will be distributed through the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Wallace and Evelyn Shellenberger, MCC volunteers in Iran, will help distribute the comforters to refugees. Two more MCC volunteers will arrive by December to assist in further distributions.

MCC needs an additional 20,000 new store-bought heavy blankets by Dec. 1 for a second shipment to Iran. The agency also welcomes comforters to replenish its stock.

"Without a doubt, a homemade comforter communicates love, concern and comfort," says MCC material resources manager Kevin King, who has visited comforter recipients from Serbia to Sudan. "One woman in Belgrade told me that when she can't sleep at night, she looks at the stitches and wonders about the life of the person who sewed it."

King added that the blanket drive gives people who don't sew a chance to contribute.

In addition, MCC will also contribute $100,000 of relief supplies. They will be purchased in Pakistan and distributed by Medair, a European church-based relief agency.

These efforts are on top of commitments MCC has made in recent weeks:

- 616 metric tons of food, now in a Pakistan warehouse. Medair plans to move 200 metric tons into Afghanistan within the next few weeks.
- $200,000 for food, shelter and blankets for Afghan refugees in Iran and families displaced within Afghanistan. The IRCS will distribute these supplies.
- 5,000 metric tons of lentils from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank valued at $2.05 million for Afghan refugees in Iran and families displaced within Afghanistan. The IRCS will distribute these supplies.—*MCC News Service*

To donate blankets or comforters for Mennonite Central Committee's Afghan refugee assistance, contact the nearest MCC office for drop-off locations. A suggested $20 cash donation per blanket will purchase additional blankets and relief supplies on location as needed. For more information, call 877-517-5673. Checks should be marked Afghan Crisis account #5701-2000.

MWC letter offers condolences, encouragement

KINSHASA, Congo—The worldwide Mennonite fellowship is encouraging its U.S. sisters and brothers to keep "your eyes fixed on Jesus Christ" in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, according to a letter from Mennonite World Conference (MWC) leaders.

MWC president Mesach Krisetya and executive director Larry Miller sent their letter to Mennonites and Brethren in Christ in the United States from Congo, where they were on a pastoral visit. Noting Congo's suffering due to war and economic and political crisis, Krisetya and Miller wrote that "expressions of grief and solidarity with Americans and with you in particular are prominent in nearly every meeting and worship service."

Krisetya and Miller also conveyed Congolese Mennonites' exhortation to maintain the peace position. "From their own life situation, they know that you now face heavy pressure and high obstacles as you seek to follow and bear witness to the Savior who loves enemies," the letter stated. "They believe that a warlike response to the Sept. 11 violence will harm many people and impede Christian witness around the world."

In addition, the letter asked for prayers for an Oct. 15 peace conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to address the situation in Congo.—*MWC News Service*

Clarification: In the photo caption accompanying "Living Water Rises in the Windy City" in the Oct. 16 issue, congregational members are not offering prayers of blessing for Ian Davenport but prayers that he would be an instrument of God's peace and a channel of God's healing love in the military.

Long-term mission workers have seen 35 years of growth in the Brazil Mennonite Church

ELKHART, Ind.—In 1630, Dutch colonists—including three Mennonites—settled on South America's easternmost point, what is now Recife, Brazil. Twenty-four years later, the Portuguese expelled the Dutch, and the Mennonites sailed back to the Netherlands.

Otis and Betty Hochstetler

After more than 300 years, Mennonites returned. Two of them, Mennonite Board of Missions workers Betty and Otis Hochstetler, have served the Brazil Mennonite Church in various ways since their arrival in 1966.

Since the Hochstetlers' first assignment managing two Christian bookstores in Brasilia, they have served in four of the five regions of the Brazil Mennonite Church. They have been involved in church planting, leadership training and youth ministry. In 2000, they completed eight years of coordinating theological education by extension for Region IV from a base in Conceição do Araguaia.

Last year, the Brazil Mennonite Church invited the Hochstetlers to work from a base in Recife. The move to a high-rise apartment near beautiful beaches was a welcome change from the rugged, rural regions of central Brazil. "At our age, bouncing around in the back of a pickup truck is no longer so much fun," Betty says.

In Recife, there is lively interest in the extension courses. Already 33 percent of the region's church members have enrolled, which means that the Hochstetlers are leading up to 15 classes each week.

"We note in those areas where significant numbers of church members have completed the extension courses, there is more stability, more maturity," Otis says. "The church isn't bowled over by every passing wind because they possess criteria for discerning what is of God."

A long-held dream came true for Betty a year ago when the Brazil Mennonite Church appointed her to coordinate the production of its own Sunday-school materials. The project, which includes translating and adapting three years of the Jubilee curriculum for two age groupings, was made possible by a grant from the Mennonite-affiliated Schowalter Foundation of Newton, Kan. The initial goal is to complete the first year's materials by September 2002.

"Brazilians are proud of the cultural differences that separate their nation from the Spanish-speaking countries around them," Betty says. "We are developing materials that are concise, creative, culturally appropriate in the Brazilian context and consistent with Anabaptist theology."

The Jubilee series often has children gathering on a rug around a lighted candle to participate in the reading of the Bible story. For North Americans, the candle symbolizes God's presence and power to enlighten. In Brazil, however, candles are associated with spiritism and the occult.

"Our team needed to search for another way to show God's presence," Betty says. "We decided to create a ritual emphasizing God as the Word, using the same Bible each Sunday and an attractive bookmark."

In April of next year, Betty will begin workshops to prepare congregations to use the Sunday school materials.

"Our hearts overflow with joy and gratitude for the opportunity the Mennonite churches in North America and Brazil have given us to serve God all these years," Betty says. "It is a delight to see how the national churches have matured and taken on all the responsibilities in their country and are even sending out missionaries."

The mission agency of the Brazil Mennonite Church, created in 1999, supports workers in Mozambique and Albania. "The effect of mission on the Brazilian church has been positive," Otis says. "It helps them go beyond themselves and to be grateful for what they have."

—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES
A PROGRAM OF MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
21 SOUTH
5 BLOCKS

MCC photo by Doug Lapp

It takes more than a village

Ten Thousand Villages staff unveil a new sign outside the organization's warehouse and office in Akron, Pa., on Sept. 19. Also that day was a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Ten Thousand Villages' new warehouse in nearby Leola.

For Laotian congregation, peace curriculum provides challenges and new perspectives

ST. CATHARINES, Ont.—For many of the members of Lao Christian Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation in St. Catharines, Jesus' directive to go the second mile creates a painful dilemma.

"Many Laotian people came to North America because they were fleeing war," says Kuaying Teng, co-pastor of the congregation. "They had seen family members killed, and their culture and tradition says: 'Fight back. Get revenge. An eye for an eye.' "

So when Teng agreed this past spring to have his congregation test a new congregational peace curriculum called Second Mile, he knew it would create much discussion. He was right.

"He told us that they didn't even get finished working through the curriculum, because there was so much discussion," says Second Mile coordinator Doug Krehbiel, director of peace and justice resources for the Commission on Home Ministries. Second Mile is sponsored by CHM, the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Central Committee U.S., MCC Canada and the Church of the Brethren. The material is expected to be ready for publication and use next summer.

"The people would ask me, 'What does second mile mean?' " Teng says. "That gave me a chance to look at the Scriptures in some of my sermons.

"Lao people learn that if someone does something to you, you are supposed to fight back. But we learned with Second Mile that there is something different in the teaching of Jesus and in Mennonite peace theology."

Looking at the Second Mile curriculum gave members of his congregation a new perspective on their religious affiliation. "Some Lao people think they are supposed to be Mennonite because Mennonites sponsored them to come to North America," Teng says. "But I tell them, 'You are Mennonite by faith, not by culture or home or who sponsors you.'

"You could say that Mennonite means 'follower of Menno,' but who did Menno follow? He followed Christ, and so do we."

This new perspective has extended to brother and sister Mennonites who are not Lao, Teng says. "What most Lao people know of American culture is that it is violent," he says. "People in my church were amazed that Americans [and Canadians] had written this Second Mile curriculum. I told them that 'American Mennonite' is not the same as your view of 'American,' there are some who disagree with the dominant culture."

Says Krehbiel: "The Second Mile steering committee hopes the curriculum will be pertinent, applicable and inspirational to the diversity that is the Mennonite church. This is a good sign that it will be."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

> You could say that Mennonite means 'follower of Menno,' but who did Menno follow? He followed Christ, and so do we.
>
> —*Kuaying Teng*

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this date in Mennonite history

Oct. 23, 1727—Authorities in the Alsace region of Europe require a list of Mennonites, including numbers, places of residence and occupations, living in the area.

Administrator-turned-minister gets MMA award

RALEIGH, N.C.—Four years ago, Alan Reberg walked away from his university administrative position to start a ministry walking among the poor. On Oct. 7, he walked away with the first Journey Award, given by Mennonite Mutual Aid for holistic Christian stewardship among Anabaptists.

Reberg and his wife joined Raleigh Mennonite Church nine years ago. Five years later, he left his job at the University of North Carolina to become the congregation's minister for community development. It was a position that didn't exist until Reberg saw a need for it.

"I do not create or develop community," he says. "Our ministry is an intersection of lives and experiences. ... We grow and learn together. My personal liberation and wholeness are unfolding as I sit and walk with others."

Reberg received the award during the congregation's Oct. 7 worship service.—*MMA News Service*

Two recognized by EMU alumni association

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Marilyn Metzler uses a stethoscope. Bill Detweiler uses a microphone. On Oct. 14, both were honored for their work of love, compassion and hope. The alumni association of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg named Metzler as Alumna of the Year and Detweiler as Distinguished Service Award recipient.

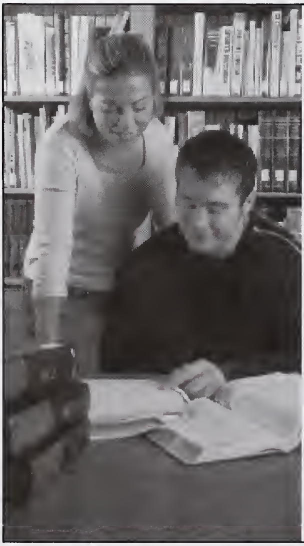
Metzler, a 1992 graduate, is a nurse and health educator from Richmond, Va. After graduating from EMU, she served in Somalia and Djibouti. Metzler now works with Cross-Over Ministry Health Center in Richmond, where she coordinates community volunteers trained to teach courses on healthy living and disease prevention.

Detweiler, a 1951 graduate, is a retired pastor living in Kidron, Ohio, where he continues as speaker of *The Calvary Hour,* the pioneer radio ministry started by his father, William, in 1936.

MCC Canada names new executive director

WINNIPEG—Donald Peters, a Mennonite Central Committee veteran and former high school administrator, started Sept. 1 as the new executive director of MCC Canada. Peters comes to the Winnipeg-based job after six years as principal of Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute in Winnipeg. From 1988 to 1993, he and his wife, Elaine, directed MCC's programs in Brazil.

"This is humbling, gratifying and scary," Peters says, "a position we must never take lightly."—*MCC Canada News Service*



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Events

Swiss-Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association annual membership banquet, Oct. 29, 6:30 p.m. at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan. Speaker: William Keel. Contact: Delbert Goering, 316-345-2844.

Workers

Abrahams, Brent, Goessel, Kan., has begun a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment as maintenance assistant and food bank assistant for La Puente of Alamosa, Colo.

Abrahams, Pam, Goessel, Kan., has begun a two-year MVS assignment as director of Noah's Ark Daycare in Alamosa, Colo.

Aeschliman, Julie, Archbold, Ohio, is beginning a two-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Akron, Pa., as administrative assistant for Ten Thousand Villages.

Albrecht, Frank and Elizabeth Soto, Lancaster, Pa., are beginning four-year MCC assignments in Armenia, Colombia, as peace educators.

Alcock, Jessica, Upland, Calif., has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a teacher assistant at Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis.

Allison, Paisley, Phoenix, is beginning a one-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Service and Learning Together (SALT) assignment in Choma, Zambia, as a teacher.

Barahona, Rafael, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as assistant to the director of Mile End in Montreal.

Boyer, Joan, has begun as minister of nurture and outreach at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Brubacher, Anne, North Newton, Kan., has begun a two-year MVS assignment as VORP program coordinator in Boulder, Colo.

Carpenter, Rand and Selena McCoy Carpenter, Harrisonburg, Va., are beginning three-year MCC assignments in Milot, Haiti, as health program advisers.

Carter, Adam, Bellefontaine, Ohio, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a community worker at Welcome Inn, Hamilton, Ont.

Checchio, Rhiannon, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a home school assistance tutor for Inner City Development in San Antonio.

Claassen, Rebecca, Beatrice, Neb., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an administrative assistant for the Government Accountability Project in Washington.

Dueck, Hannah, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as program developer at the Zuni Peace Center in Tucson, Ariz.

Edwards, Erma, Iowa City, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a staff person at Marian Clinic, Topeka, Kan.

Ehst, Doug, Franconia, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a home repair worker for Community Home Repair Projects of Arizona in Tucson.

Ehst, Valerie, Franconia, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as program coordinator for Kids' Cafe in Tucson, Ariz.

Fellenbaum, Kent, Washington Boro, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment at Kansas Rural Center and at Topeka (Kan.) Center for Peace and Justice.

Friesen Reed, Stanley and Tricia, Bourbon, Ind., and Swan River, Man., are beginning four-year MCC assignments in Taperillas, Bolivia, as agricultural promoters.

Good, Ryan, Washington, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a home repair worker for Community Home Repair Projects of Arizona in Tucson.

Harder, Deirdre, Mountain Lake, Minn., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher assistant for Latino Youth in Chicago.

Hawkins, Lisa, Harrisonburg, Va., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a case manager and an after-school teacher in Tucson, Ariz.

Heiks, Claire, Appleton, Wis., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an after-school teacher for Community of Hope in Washington.

Hershey, Tanya, Bridgewater, Vt., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Nanjing, China, working at rural development and poverty alleviation.

Hess, Shana, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a preschool teacher at Bethlehem Community Center in Richmond, Va.

Hoover, Christopher, Morris Plains, N.J., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a staff person for Winnipeg Harvest in Winnipeg.

Hostetler, Rachel, Kansas City, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a social worker for AIDS Services of Dallas.

Jantzi, Denton, was installed Oct. 21 as pastor of Beatrice (Neb.) Mennonite Church.

Kaiser, Josephine, Alpena, Mich., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a communications assistant with Exceptional Parents Unlimited in Fresno, Calif.

Kaufman, Jennifer, Overland Park, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a computer support assistant and computer literacy resource person in Seattle.

Kennel, Jonathan, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Chiang Rai, Thailand.

Kilheffer, Bradley, Mobile, Ala., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an assistant in architect services for Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Ga.

King, Kendra, Hutchinson, Kan., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Kingston, Jamaica, as a drama teacher.

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Kingsley, Carmen, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as regional coordination associate for the Chicago Teacher's Center.

Kisare, Phebe, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as a staff associate for Mennonite Conciliation Service.

Krehbiel, Amy, Pretty Prairie, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a nurse in San Francisco.

Logsdon, Kristina, Cumberland, Md., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an assistant at Washington Toxics Coalition in Seattle.

Births

Askar, Jinow, Sept. 5, to Ahmed and Rahma Askar, Steinbach, Man.

Bergey, Alexander Todd, Sept. 26, to Christopher and Wendy Mead Bergey, McKinney, Texas.

Byler, Dylan Ray, Sept. 19, to Vernon and Cynthia Troyer Byler, Hartville, Ohio.

Christle, McKinsie Suzanne, Sept. 26, to Ted and Jodi Moore Christle, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Click, Abigael Sophia, Sept. 27, to Erick and Amee Yoder Click, Middlebury, Ind.

Denney, Jedidiah Bud, Sept. 19, to Peter and Shannon Zehr Denney, Lowville, N.Y.

Friesen, Walter Garrett, Sept. 22, to Kim and Karen Warren Friesen, Topeka, Kan.

Longacre Hurst, Anika, Sept. 16, to Cara and Kevin Longacre Hurst, Lancaster, Pa.

Martens, Daniel Anthony, Sept. 8, to Alvina and Denny Martens, Steinbach, Man.

Miller, Wyatt Andrew, Sept. 26, to Brian and Jody Sommer Miller, Hartville, Ohio.

Nancarvis, Anna Elizabeth, Sept. 23, to Tim and Karyn Sipos Nancarvis, Lititz, Pa.

Neufeld Weaver, Ana Esperanza, Sept. 25, to Laurel and Paul Neufeld Weaver, Worthington, Minn.

Stuckey, Antonio Carlito, Sept. 13, received for adoption Sept. 26 by Phil and Barb Roth Stuckey, Archbold, Ohio.

Turner, Breckyn Renae, Sept. 27, to Scott and Dawnelle Duerksen Turner, McPherson, Kan.

Vandever, Nickolous Wilhelm, Sept. 15, to Andreas and Rhonda Toews Vandever, Inman, Kan.

Weaver-Stoltzfus, Philip Ethan, Sept. 21, to Phil and Shelly Weaver-Stoltzfus, Denver.

Yoder, Ella Elizabeth, Sept. 27, to Rob and Sara Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Barnhill/Weisheit: Karen Barnhill, Lincoln, Neb., and Darwin Weisheit, Henderson, Neb., Sept. 29 at First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln.

Bender/Fletcher: Alea Bender, Tavistock, Ont., and Randy Fletcher, Tavistock, Ont., Aug. 25.

Bender/Nortz: Allen Bender, Glenfield, N.Y., and Kami Nortz, Lowville, N.Y., Sept. 29 at Lowville Mennonite Church.

Birkey/Bode: Warren Birkey, Paxton, Ill., and Glenda Bode, Gibson City, Ill., Sept. 15 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Howe/Wenger: Betsie Howe, Ohio, and R. Gordon Wenger, Harrisonburg, Va., Sept. 15.

Deaths

Crooks, Doreen Rudiger, 75, Great Bend, Kan., died Sept. 24 of a heart attack. Parents: Ed and Myrtle Rudiger (deceased). Survivors: children Bob Campbell, Mikael, Linda Ford; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Graveside service at Mennonite Cemetery, Pawnee Rock, Kan.

Fehr, Justina, 91, Steinbach, Man., died Sept. 8. Funeral: Sept. 13.

Hilty, Celia Sprunger, 89, Bluffton, Ohio, died Sept. 13. Spouse: Herman E. Hilty (deceased). Parents: Albert and Elma Sprunger (deceased). Survivors: children Ann, Judith Kingsley, Rachel Friesen, Suzanne Lind; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 23 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Iwanowski, Katharyn Dashkiewich, 74, Wayland, Iowa, died Sept. 26 of cancer. Spouse: Leon Iwanowski. Parents: John and Maria Dashkiewich (deceased). Other survivors: children Wesley, Victor; two grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Long, Howard M., 72, Washington Boro, Pa., died Aug. 14 of a stroke. Spouse: Betty J. Swisher Long. Parents: Charles and Mamie Eberly Long (deceased). Other survivors: children Glenn, Gary, Galen, Gordon; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Habecker Mennonite Church, Washington Boro.

Martin, Norman, 87, St. Jacobs, Ont., died Sept. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Gladys Koch Martin. Parents: Norman and Magdalena Bowman Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Winston, Raymond, Isabel Bauman, Bernice Brubacher, Elaine Stoltzfus, Edith Edmiston; 17 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Miller, Helen Erb, 88, Marshville, N.C., died Sept. 19. Spouse: Ira E. Miller. Parents: David and Minnie Witmer Erb (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Loretta Miller Helmuth; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Miller, Icie Dora Yoder, 97, Sterling, Ohio, died Sept. 13. Spouse: Dan W. Miller (deceased). Parents: Amos and Amanda Smucker Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Clifford, Gerald, Carol Nolt; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 17 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Minnis, Carlton, 71, Philadelphia, died Sept. 26 of heart failure. Spouse: Hattie Ellis Minnis. Parents: Carl Minnis (deceased) and Kathrin Minnis Green. Other survivors: son Carlton Anthony Minnis; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 6 at Second Mennonite Church, Philadelphia.

Nissley, Ruth Newcomer, 90, Lancaster, Pa., died Aug. 25. Spouse: Roy R. Nissley (deceased). Parents: Jacob Brubaker and Sarah Greider Newcomer (deceased). Survivors: children Wilber, Sara Ann Howard, Mary Jane, Barbara; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Habecker Mennonite Church, Washington Boro, Pa.

Penner, Ella Jantzen, 93, Beatrice, Neb., died Sept. 24. Spouse: Henry W. Penner. Parents: Alexander and Helen Ensz Jantzen (deceased). Other survivors: son John; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Reynolds, Elsie M. Rupp, 89, Archbold, Ohio, died Sept. 23. Spouse: Albert Reynolds (deceased). Parents: Simon and Emma Wyse Rupp (deceased). Survivors: children Roger, Ron, Jerry, Shirley Hochstedler, Marlene Weaver, Susie Norris; 25 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Shoemaker, Eugene E., 87, Eureka, Ill., died Sept. 23. Spouse: Eda Shoemaker. Parents: Arthur and Lucy Engel Shoemaker (deceased). Other survivors: children Alice, Marilyn Longfellow, Leola, Geneva Swartzentruber, Loren, Ivan, Merle, Ronald, Jerald; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 27 at Freeport (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Tarvin, Elma, 90, Dewey, Ill., died Sept. 20. Spouse: Wayne Tarvin (deceased). Survivors: son Richard. Funeral: Sept. 22 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Zook, Mattie Hochstetler, 100, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Sept. 26. Spouse: Ralph D. Zook (deceased). Parents: Alexander and Mary Jane Miller Hochstetler (deceased). Survivors: seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

- **Trissels Mennonite Church**, Broadway, Va., has an opening for a 1/4 time ***youth minister***. Please contact Trissels Mennonite Church, 540-896-7289 or email <trisselsmc@juno.com>.

- **Pine Lake Fellowship Camp**, Meridian, Miss., seeks ***leadership in camping ministry***. Positions include administrator, maintenance, summer programming.

  Contact Cheryl Landis, 601-693-9985; <jclandis3@juno.com>.

- **Menno Haven Camp & Retreat Center**, Tiskilwa, Ill., seeks two full-time/year-round positions: ***program director*** and ***maintenance person***. Both open immediately.

  For further information, contact Doc Johnson at 815-646-4344 or <doc@mennohaven.com>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates May 1, July 15 and Aug. 15) and couples in 2002 and 2003.

  For information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***special projects coordinator***. Part-time (50-60%) position begins January 2002. Relational abilities, follow-through. Cross-cultural experience. Self-starter, team player. Research, develop and implement designated projects that impact global missions.

  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline: Nov. 16, 2001.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***administrative assistant*** to assist the special projects coordinator and the representative to Middle East/West Asia. Part-time position begins January 2002. Responsibilities include scheduling, correspondence, filing and proofreading.

  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline: Nov. 16, 2001.

- **Opportunities with Eastern Mennonite Missions:** Public health nurse, educators, leadership developer, director of Bible Institute and administrator needed in ***Peru***.

  For further information, contact Mark Emerson at 717-898-2251 or <marke@emm.org>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** invites applications for the full-time position of ***admissions counselor***, with responsibility for planning and carrying out the student recruitment program. This term position, which begins in mid-November and concludes Aug. 30, 2002, has the possibility of turning into a permanent appointment.

  Please submit a resume and letter of application to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; email <akdueck@bethanycs.net>.

- **Messiah College**'s Sider Institute for Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan Studies is sponsoring an undergraduate ***research/writing competition*** in Anabaptist studies, ***deadline Jan. 10, 2002***. Undergraduates or recent college graduates are invited to submit papers addressing Anabaptist subjects, contemporary or historical. Disciplinary possibilities include sociology, history, theology, political science, economics, communications, philosophy, literature, women's studies, etc. Awards are $500, $300 and $200, respectively.

  For submission guidelines, contact David Weaver-Zercher, The Sider Institute, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027; <dzercher@messiah.edu>; or visit <www.messiah.edu/siderinstitute> (click on "News & Events").

- **Camp Friedenswald**, Cassopolis, Mich., seeks a full-time ***guest group coordinator/administrative assistant*** who desires to work in Christian camping, enjoys meeting and working with people, and has exceptional organizational and time management skills. This person is usually the first and last person to meet campers, works closely with the executive director, plus program, outdoor education and food service staff. Responsibilities include booking and scheduling camp usage, clerical management of the office, answering the phone and managing the camp store. Qualifications include active Christian life that embraces the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith, resonating with the ministry of camp, ability to relate to a wide variety of ages and people, and office, computer, organizational and time management skills. Benefits include salary, housing, meals, health insurance and retirement plan.

  Send resume to Joe Graber, 2377 E. 400 S., Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-8664; or <jgraber@adamswells.com>.

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classifieds

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- **CROSS Inc.** seeks ***executive director*** for Christian organization that provides residential and social services to adults with developmental disabilities. Bachelor's degree required, preferably in human services. Experience desired in administration, public relations and working with people with developmental disabilities. Good communication and computer skills necessary.

Send resume by Oct. 29 to CROSS Inc., 712 Pinola Rd., Shippensburg, PA 17257-9341.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** invites applications for a full-time faculty position in a master's degree program in ***counselor education*** with school and community counseling tracks, beginning fall 2002. The role includes director responsibilities. Doctorate in counselor education and Virginia LPC required. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of excellence in teaching in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, practice and teamwork, and who are supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

Please send letter of application describing teaching interests, administrative qualifications, counseling experience, vitae, scholarly papers, all graduate transcripts and three letters of recommendation to Provost Beryl Brubaker, EMU, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review of completed applications will begin immediately and will continue until position is filled.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces faculty openings beginning fall 2002:

Communication: Ph.D. preferred in communication/media studies/electronic media production/Internet development; master's required. Primary teaching assignment will be within the communication major with emphasis on writing for new media, designing interactive experiences, Internet/Web production and communication theory.

Early childhood education and literacy: Ph.D. in early childhood education and/or literacy with experience in teaching early education and literacy required. Responsibilities include: teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in early childhood, diverse needs and literacy; supervising field-based program experiences; advising undergraduate and graduate students; providing leadership for the EMU Early Learning Center.

English: Ph.D. required. Seeking candidate with expertise in 19th- or 20th-century British literature. Preference will be given to candidates with secondary expertise in creative writing.

Nursing: Ph.D. preferred; master's degree in nursing required. Education and experience related to medical-surgical nursing required. Responsibilities include clinical teaching in acute-care settings and student advisement. Skills in interpersonal and public relations, leadership and management, curriculum development and problem solving are essential.

Philosophy and theology: Ph.D. in philosophy or related discipline preferred. Seeking a candidate with expertise in the intersection between philosophy and theology. Primary teaching assignment focusing on the philosophy component of a philosophy and theology major, including history of philosophy, contemporary philosophy, critical thinking, philosophy of science, ethics and social philosophy.

World religions/missions: Ph.D. (or equivalent) or A.B.D. required. Expertise in cross-cultural and Two-Thirds World issues required. Seeking a candidate with commitment to Anabaptist-Mennonite theological and missiological perspectives, with significant cross-cultural ministry/scholarly experience. Teaching assignment will include the core course in world religions for all Bible and religion majors and other missions/religion/anthropology courses. Must be willing to teach additional Bible and religion courses within the general education curriculum.

Spanish: Ph.D. in Spanish required or master's degree with a related doctorate. Seeking a candidate with competency in teaching language, civilization and literature for a growing Spanish program.

Education: An earned doctorate in education required; A.B.D. considered. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in curriculum instruction and action research; mentoring graduate students; supervising field-based program experiences; advising undergraduate and graduate students. Successful candidates must demonstrate effective teaching and an ability to do scholarly research.

EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>; web <www.emu.edu>. Review will begin Nov. 30, 2001. EMU reserves the right to fill the positions at any time or keep the positions open. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Living Hope Christian Fellowship** seeks a ***pastor of Mandarin ministries***. We are a young, vibrant, growing Mandarin congregation of about 70 in Whiterock, B.C. Most of our regular attendees are new Christians or seekers. We hope to fill this position by mid-2002. Qualifications: committed disciple of Jesus Christ, gifted in biblical preaching and relationship-building, bilingual in Mandarin and English, a graduate of a biblical seminary and in agreement with the Confession of Faith in A Mennonite Perspective, experienced in ministry.

To submit resumes or for further information contact Lorin Bergen, Living Hope Christian Fellowship, 12246 - 100th Ave, Surrey, BC V3V 2X1; 604-588-8109; <livinghope@aebc.com>.

- **Mennonite Urban Corps**, Pittsburgh, seeks ***executive director***. Small Christian nonprofit following in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition seeks executive director to continue significant success in attracting recent college graduates to serve and celebrate Pittsburgh in one-year voluntary service terms. Director is responsible for identifying, negotiating and maintaining work placement in the areas of peacemaking, community building and the arts; recruiting participants; directing the weekly Urban Studies Seminar and immersing participants in the culture and history of the city and the church; working with board to maintain long-term development strategy and raise needed funds; accounting and record keeping; and communicating with potential participants, funders, schools and placement sites. Ideal qualifications include: commitment to the Mennonite Church locally and globally, commitment to alternative forms of civic service including the arts, experience in urban living, experience/capacity for working with intelligent and artistic top graduates, exceptional communication and networking skills, self-starter, and experience in development and administration.

Send cover letter and resume to 5615 Stanton Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206; <www.mennocorps.org>.

- **Fresno Pacific University**, the only fully accredited private Christian university in California's Central Valley, seeks faculty in the following areas. Fresno Pacific University serves a diverse population of religious, ethnic and national traditions. General required faculty qualifications include: demonstration of expertise within the appropriate field (represented by at least a doctorate or a nearly completed doctorate in the field), highly successful college/university-level teaching experience, commitment to working within a community of learners and a Christian commitment and lifestyle consistent with university goals.

Fresno Pacific College, the undergraduate school of the university, seeks faculty in:

Contemporary Christian ministries and inter-cultural studies
Composition and rhetorical studies
Literature/critical theory
Literature and writing (half-time)

Fresno Pacific Graduate School, the graduate school of the university, seeks faculty in:

Program director and faculty in mathematics education
Program director and faculty in technology education
Elementary mathematics education
Reading and literacy education

Send a letter of application to Office of the Provost, Attn. Dr. John Yoder, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut Ave., Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2031; fax 559-453-5502; email <blhorn@fresno.edu>. Applications will be reviewed beginning Nov. 1, 2001 (undergraduate positions), and Dec. 1, 2001 (graduate positions), and the appointments will be made as soon thereafter as suitable candidates are found.

FPU, in its hiring practices, does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic or social background, sex, age or physical handicap. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Fresno Pacific University is sponsored by the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Full job descriptions may be viewed on-line at the Fresno Pacific University website: <http://www.fresno.edu>, at <http://www.cccu.org> or at <http://HigherEdJobs.com>. Information about the university and downloadable application forms are available at <http://www.fresno.edu>.

The Mennonite **is getting a new look! Watch for our premier issue Jan. 8, 2002.**

by Rich Preheim

After Sept. 11, the Christian world laments

From neighboring Canada to Pakistan on the other side of the globe, the international Christian community responded with shock, horror and sympathy following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, reports *Ecumenical Courier*, published by the World Council of Churches.

"We are devastated by the bestiality that can infect ordinary human beings and transform them into mass murderers and deranged suicides," wrote Riad Jarjour, general secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in Limassol, Cyprus. "With you we mourn the innocent dead. … And we do so out of a Middle East that has known more than its fair share of death, disillusionment and fear."

Palestinians in East Jerusalem who run MECC's service to Palestinian refugees, added: "We reject these abhorrent acts, and we identify with the thousands who fell victim. We are sure that the overwhelming majority of our Palestinian people shares the feelings we express here."

Similar sentiments came from Pakistan. "This massive loss has caused a state of chaos among all the nations, and [we] feel powerless in the face of political fanaticism and extremism that have taken their bloody toll," wrote Victor Azariah, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Pakistan.

The United Church of Canada wrote: "We watch as this day of horror unfolds and cannot fathom the depths of hatred and desperation that could have willed such devastation upon innocent people." Said the Baptist Union of Norway, "We are choked at the insane terrorist actions."

Pope Shenouda III of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Alexandria, Egypt, also lamented the unwarranted deaths. "What did innocent people do to deserve these actions?" he asked. "Those who faithfully went to their offices? Those who were traveling on the airplanes? And what of the members of the emergency services upon whom the buildings collapsed?"

Journalist, heal thyself

Now that ABC News has decided not to renew the contract of groundbreaking religion correspondent Peggy Wehmeyer, Canada can now boast having the continent's only full-time national television news religion reporter.

CTV News has appointed Mark Schneider to head up "Horizons," a weekly segment on the network's national evening newscast about spirituality and ethics. It is a significant change not only for CTV but also for Schneider. A 26-year broadcasting veteran, he says his new beat gives him a chance for healing as a journalist.

"For years I practiced a very toxic, vandalistic form of TV journalism, full of anger, aggression and indifference to all consequences except to my own career," Schneider tells *Christian Week*. Now he wants to bring to his new job "my sense of curiosity instead of blind ambition, a sense of caring instead of contempt."

Schneider, a Jew with a deep interest in Buddhism, says Horizons' purpose is to "chronicle the significant yearning of our country for a higher meaning in life, to portray this quest for moral moorings, for a balance in life and for refuge from the pressures of the day." He hopes to cover topics such as intercessory prayer, spirituality and healing, and Harry Potter.

Employment benefits, fringe and otherwise

Airing the Good News is also apparently good work. *NRB*, the magazine of the National Religious Broadcasters organization, recently asked the general managers in its membership database to respond to the phrase, "I am satisfied with my job." Fifty-nine percent strongly agreed, while 39 percent agreed.

Of course, their satisfaction is probably not entirely due to their earthly rewards. Twenty-two percent of respondents make less than $35,000 a year, and 24 percent make between $35,000 and $45,000 a year. But 14 percent make more than $95,000.

There are, however, other benefits of some note. Eighty-two percent have health benefits, 65 percent have company-provided life insurance and 61 percent have a retirement plan.

But only 15 percent have stock options, and 28 percent drive a company-provided car.

Call to prayer

Of all the messages being transmitted today via cell phones, probably not many of them are the Lord's Prayer. But a British Web site recently held a contest to reduce the prayer from its current 370-plus characters (depending on the version) to 160 characters, the size of the text-messaging screen on a cell phone. *The Lutheran* reports that the winning entry, from a university student, was: "dad@hvn, ur spshl. we want wot u want & urth2b like hvn. giv us food & 4giv r sins lyke we 4giv uvaz. don't test us! save us! bcos we know ur boss, ur tuf & ur cool 4eva! ok?"

Tidbits

- Some 90,000 people in 27 states have bought fraudulent investments from organizations posing as religious groups.—*Calvary Messenger*
- Thirty percent of American Muslims belong to the Nation of Islam. —*Sojourners*
- A group of French Trappist monks have started construction of a monastery in the Czech Republic, the first in that country since the fall of communism. —*National Catholic Reporter*
- Sixty-one percent of survey respondents said they prefer an oval shaped seal instead of a circular one for Community of Christ (formerly Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints).—*Herald*
- Each year some 900 U.S. Seventh-day Adventists face workplace problems because of their faith, usually regarding their observance of Saturday as the Sabbath. —*Liberty*

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Gordon Houser

Identity check

For freedom Christ has set us free.
—Galatians 5:1a

Many of us feel caught, in these days, between our identity as citizens of God's "holy nation" (1 Peter 2:9) and as citizens of the United States. We are both, but living that out can be tricky.

We read of polls that say more than 80 percent of Americans approve of the way our government is responding to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, including the bombing of Afghanistan that began Oct. 7. Those of us who disagree with such a response, even while we may applaud the restraint U.S. leaders have shown, may feel alone, cut off from our fellow citizens.

In normal times (if there are such times), disagreeing with the government is standard, not to be disdained. But in these days, a voice of dissent may be viewed as unpatriotic, even traitorous.

We may protest that loving our country means wishing what is best for all its people. We may argue that the strategy currently being employed will likely bring more terrorist attacks and even swell the number of people who hate America. This magazine has done that, partly to help our readers discuss the current crisis with fellow citizens.

As we negotiate the fine line between being citizens of the kingdom of God and U.S. citizens, we will make mistakes. Yet God's grace is there, like a close-fitting garment.

The bottom line, however, is that our ultimate loyalty is to God, our Creator and Redeemer. As Donald Kraybill writes (p. 6), "Christians must be careful to distinguish between the god of American civil religion and the God revealed in Jesus of Nazareth."

Many of us have heard the line, "You should be grateful for all the soldiers who died so that you could be free." (These people rarely say, "... for all the soldiers who *killed* so that you could be free.") This assumes that our freedom comes from acts of violence.

But if you look at our nation's history, you'll find that in many instances our freedoms resulted more from courageous people who acted nonviolently, while our leaders' penchant for going to war actually hindered people's freedoms. (To learn more, read *The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History* by James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter.)

The essential point here is that Christ, not soldiers, has set us free. He died for our sins; he did not kill for our sins.

Thankful as we are—and should be—for the freedoms we enjoy in our nation, our true freedom is in Christ. And our calling is to proclaim that freedom to peoples of all nations.

God "desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). If our freedom comes at the cost of others' freedoms or of their lives, then it is at best a limited freedom.

Living in God's freedom requires new eyes and means we must "repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). The good news is that God knows we will make mistakes yet does not give up on us.

On Oct. 7 my pastor, Stan Bohn, preached a sermon on Genesis 3. He said that we, all of humanity, have been kicked out of the garden. In other words, we are sinners; we are going to make mistakes.

Stan pointed out, however, that "the Lord God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). Here were these pitiful creatures who had messed up, then tried to hide their shame by sewing fig leaves together (v. 7). Before sending them out of Eden, God mercifully clothed them.

As we negotiate the fine line between being citizens of the kingdom of God and U.S. citizens, we will make mistakes. Yet God's grace is there, like a close-fitting garment.

These days call for courage as we become increasingly aware of what it might mean to be "aliens and exiles" (1 Peter 2:11). We will need to take risks as we follow Jesus in troublesome times, knowing who we are and where our true home lies.

Christ has set us free to be God's children, to live out that identity in all our stumbling ways.—*gh*

the Mennonite

October 30, 2001

Nothing
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Newcomers help us place Christ above ethnicity.

'Mennonite' culture

page 4

7 Watch our language
8 Edmonton Mennonites help newcomers
10 Candlemakers want to turn up the heat
16 A flesh-and-blood church

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The benefits of violence

I agree with Rich Preheim's editorial ("A Chance to Save Our Eyesight," Oct. 2) in urging restraint and forbearance on U.S. leaders following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon. But I'm not so sure about his assertion that "despite its popularity, violence has proved to be an utter failure in resolving conflict." Nor am I persuaded by his claim that any use of violence only fuels further violence.

True, violence does not resolve conflict once and for all, any more than eating a meal forever cures hunger. Decisive acts of violence, however, have helped bring specific conflicts, such as World War II, to an end. And, as William Miller points out in *Nonviolence: A Christian Interpretation,* "Marginal outcroppings of violence may underscore the tragedy of a given situation and expedite its solution."

This is not to deny that nonviolent methods of conflict resolution should be sought and tried but rather to question the sweeping claim that all violence is futile or self-perpetuating. Miller puts it well: "It would be moralistic to assert that violence can have no other effects but disaster."

When we declare, in effect, that nonviolence works marvelously, but violence fails miserably, we oversell the former and underestimate the latter. I'm for remaining firm in our Christian peace convictions. I'm also for refraining from inflated claims that they hold the only effective key to a sinful world's many conflicts.—*J. Robert Charles, Goshen, Ind.*

Sensational news

Thanks for Marla Cole's editorial on the power of the mainstream press—or any press —to shape our thinking ("Prayer and the Power of the Press," Oct. 9). I too am bothered by so much of the mainstream press with its obvious biases: words across the screen such as "Attack on America," pundits incessantly pressing, "What are we going to do about it?" and "Are we safe?" I've even thought that if a terrorist was sitting around wondering how to terrorize, TV news would offer plenty of ideas: "Have you considered insecticide?"

Certainly news is compromised by sensationalism. I remember someone from abroad saying, "In our country we know the news is propaganda. In America, you really believe your news."

So thanks for the prophetic call to media to exercise responsibility and for us to discern. —*Eldon Epp, Manhattan, Kan.*

Action, not words

I am writing concerning the extreme lack of representation given to young adults (usually defined as ages 18 to 30) in the proposed Mennonite Church USA structure. According to my understanding of the current plan, "age-specific ministries" (which includes both younger and older adults) will be given approximately one-fifth full-time equivalent in the proposed structure. (Mennonite Church Canada has a half-time position devoted to young adults.) This is the only staffing specifically allocated to addressing the needs of young adults in the new church.

As a young adult, I find this fact to be highly insulting. I keep hearing church leaders talk about the need to reach out to young adults because they are the church of the future. But actions speak louder than words, and the action Mennonite Church USA is taking in giving such a small amount of representation to young adults says that the church values us very little.

If Mennonite Church USA is serious about keeping its young adults, it must give them more representation within the institutional framework of the church. Young adults should be appointed to various churchwide boards and committees (especially the Executive Board) and area conferences should hire ministers to relate specifically to young adults. The church must take action to show that it is serious about keeping young adults around. —*Daniel Shank Cruz, Goshen, Ind.*

Win-win situation

A lingering tragedy we need to think of is the possibility of retirees of Mennonite Publishing House losing their retirement benefits. The problem stems from losses incurred during its publishing operation, creating a large debt. Is there any solution?

For a number of years, it has been the practice in our family to give books as Christmas gifts. I am sure we are not alone. It would be appropriate to concentrate on books published by MPH's Herald Press and Faith & Life Resources. With 50 or more new titles and several hundred older titles, a good selection is possible. If buying a large volume of books and materials can make one publishing enterprise profitable, and if by reading these items we gain a new understanding of history, ourselves and Scripture, we have a win-win situation. It may not solve the whole problem, but it will help. "Blessed is he that readeth" (Revelation 1:3).—*Walt Unrau, North Newton, Kan.*

theMennonite

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

Support for a peaceful way

I have returned my income-tax rebate to Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and Witness for Peace. My conscience tells me to use the money for peaceful purposes, as I am thankful for my pacifist beliefs from the Mennonite church and my family to uphold Jesus Christ's teachings. I prefer that Congress permit me to give money to a peace tax fund, but Congress has not found enough legislative supporters to fulfill this vision.

My understanding is that CPT and Witness for Peace teams are in Colombia, where our government has spent $1.3 billion. Their witness as a peaceful choice rather than military intervention is raising awareness of the alternatives to widespread weaponry and military support that the United States provides.

Flying the flag and patriotism are shortsighted from what Jesus demands. He died for all, not just Americans. Through CPT and Witness for Peace, these teams of Christian witness provide another way to end violence in selected hot spots of the world. Through their observation of conflicts to support local victims of military intervention, others are learning that Americans can support a peaceful way. *—Keith Gerber, Canton, Ohio*

Cover criticism

I do not like to criticize but feel compelled to when I view the cover of Sept. 4 and also some of the recent covers. I cannot help but wonder how much black background portrays Christian joy, peace and victory. I will not have this on my coffee table. Do you consider the hurting, needy non-Christians who possibly see these issues? These people need our testimony of the love of Christ. Would it not be more of a witness to a hurting world if the covers were attractive?*—Mrs. Wallace Engel, Princeton, Ill.*

Cover photo
by Jon Warren

Correction: Letter-writer Jerry Stanaway's name was misspelled in the Oct. 9 Readers Say.

The *virtues* and VICES of 'Mennonite' culture

How newcomers can help Mennonites place Christ above ethnicity

by Eloise Hiebert Meneses

Jon Warren—for illustration only

Culture is a tricky thing. Its partly unconscious nature and its roots in childhood training make it difficult to perceive, especially by the culture members. And even when its tenets are consciously understood, members find themselves nearly inescapably driven to follow its dictates.

Among American Mennonites there is a dominant culture that is the product of the history of the Swiss, German, Russian and Dutch people who joined the Anabaptist movement and came to this country. Although many Mennonites are not from these ethnic backgrounds, relative newcomers from other backgrounds, who may actually have been in the church a long time, must adapt to the dominant culture in order to be fully accepted.

The features of this dominant Mennonite culture include timeliness, hard work, careful spending of money, planning, a low-key emotional style, egalitarianism, humility and family orientation. Those raised in the culture find it natural to practice these values, though they may be paying a price. They will feel that something is wrong when they encounter other (equally Christian) values brought in by newcomers. But the body of Christ benefits when members from different cultural backgrounds come together.

We Mennonites typically work much too hard on what is really our own agenda. And too often our joyless faces reveal the strain. Many of us insist on our own heavy yoke and reject Jesus' light one.

Newcomers can contribute to a fuller experience of the Christian faith if the original culture members are willing to set out on the adventure. Below are the central features of Swiss, German and Dutch Mennonite culture. I present the order in which newcomers are likely to encounter them as obstacles.

Timeliness: This virtue is not only taken for granted by most North Americans but is a foundation stone in the most powerful empire of our time, the global business community. Time is the great coordinator of our activities. But, we are in danger of becoming its slaves, if we have not done so already.

People who have strict time orientations do not realize how heavily they have been trained from childhood to make the sacrifice of relationships and personal convenience necessary to be consistently "on time." Those who have more flexible orientations to time are unable to object due to prevailing opinion.

Time is a matter of form, not content, and to the degree that form is heavily enforced, content will suffer. Hispanic worship services, for instance, start when everybody gets there (and not before), and end, not when the clock says they are done, but when the Holy Spirit is finished with the people. Even business meetings are more productive when they are content-driven rather than form-driven.

Flexible timing promotes the kind of relaxed atmosphere that encourages creativity and warmth in relationships. Microsoft workers come and go when they like, play at work (literally) if they need a break and spend much time talking with one another. Are they less productive? Certainly not. In fact, most are not able to have families due to high rates of workaholism. But their relationships with one another are strong and result in creative responses to problems.

The work ethic: A second barrier newcomers encounter is the Mennonite version of the Protestant work ethic. Mennonites view work as a gift of service offered to God. The danger is that Jesus can become more our teacher and model in living the righteous life than our Lord and Savior. The joy, freedom and forgiveness of the happy sinner, powerfully pulled by the Holy Spirit out of his or her depravity and despair, is not always part of our Christian experience.

Does God view our work as a blessing or a curse? Genesis gives us a mixed answer. Adam and Eve were to tend the garden, but this work was light work, as Jesus' yoke is an easy one. Difficulty and fruitlessness in work were part of God's curse on Adam. Yet Jesus has lifted that curse for us. Our work now is to be light and fruitful, not heavy, difficult and fruitless. Furthermore, in the New Creation, all work is the Holy Spirit's work, not our own.

We Mennonites typically work much too hard on what is really our own agenda. And too often our joyless faces reveal the strain. Many of us insist on our own heavy yoke and reject Jesus' light one. Can we allow newcomers to teach us how to trust in the Holy Spirit more than in our own accomplishments? Can we imagine ourselves not only saviors but saved? Can we mentally and physically leave our work undone in peace when it is appropriate? If not, then our trust is primarily in ourselves rather than in God.

Money and stewardship: Is there a culture out there more scrupulous with money than the dominant Mennonite one?

On the positive side, we have made our pennies and dollars stretch tremendously in producing good works. Even outsiders note the efficiency and effectiveness of our relief and development work through Mennonite Central Committee.

Yet the matter has gone too far when we are so careful about stewardship that we cannot celebrate life. In fact, our ability to forgive one another and get over differences is partly related to this celebratory attitude (or lack of it). We should be capable of "wasting" a little money. This includes practices utterly normal in most other cultures, such as paying for one another in restaurants rather than splitting the check or spending on one's own comforts.

If we cannot do these things (appropriately), then we have crossed the fine line from good stewardship of money to idolatry of it. There will be no money in heaven. We should not be too attached to it here, even for the best of reasons.

Planning: Our carefulness with money is only one symptom of a larger, more systemic illness—our heavy investment in planning.

The problem comes when we turn the grace of God into a grindstone. Many Mennonites picture discipleship like this: a sober, hard-working person with an enormous task that only she can accomplish (for the glory of God) without complaint or mistake, to be evaluated by the community and a distant Judge based on whether she gave every last drop of sweat, self-sacrificially, to the task. If the task fails, she is to blame; if it succeeds, she must be careful to take no overt credit, lest she be accused of pride. What a life!

Given such stresses, it is not surprising that our model disciple feels she must plan. Accountability requires that she anticipate every last possible eventuality.

One of the most profound teachings of the Christian church, one that differentiates it from other religions, is that an omnipotent God serves us (as when Jesus washed the disciples' feet). The Bible is clear that our plans for the Lord's work are worthless unless they are part of God's plans for us (Psalm 127). In imagining ourselves to be alone with the responsibility of building the kingdom, we run the risk of making the most serious possible spiritual mistake—the one, in fact, that Adam and Eve made. We imagine ourselves to be in control of God's creation work.

What is the alternative? A friend and teacher of mine had accidentally double-booked herself for a particular night. She was expected both at a party and at her grandmother's house. Her solution? She decided to just wait and see what happened. What shocking irresponsibility! I thought. As it turned out, her grandmother called and canceled, so everything was fine. In the end, unless we believe God works through other people and through circumstances, we do not in practicality believe in God at all.

Jon Warren—for illustration only

Low-key emotions: Due partly to the emphasis on community life and partly to the theology of pacifism, Mennonites have a low-key emotional style, with the strongest possible taboo on the overt expression of anger.

Mennonites hide emotions for two reasons: (1) fear of hurting the other person (possibly the single greatest sin in our community-oriented culture) and (2) fear of revealing ourselves to others (a concern centered on self-protection). We need to balance these concerns with (1) respect for other people's abilities to hear painful things and benefit from them and (2) a willingness to be vulnerable with one another, despite possible criticism.

Due partly to the stress on community life and partly to the theology of pacifism, Mennonites have a low-key emotional style, with the strongest possible taboo on the overt expression of anger.

Newcomers do not know how to read us. Years of training have gone into our ability to make microevaluations of each other's emotional states. Newcomers also produce sharp reactions in us. We consider them too loud emotionally and imagine they are more upset

continued on page 6

The virtues and vices of 'Mennonite' culture

continued from page 5

Jon Warren—for illustration only

or demanding than they perhaps are.

I recommend learning from newcomers about the honest expression of needs and emotions, including those deemed selfish in our community. Jesus did say, "Let your yes be yes, and your no be no."

Humility and equality: Mennonites pride themselves on being humble. Our rejection of clerics and affirmation of the full equality of all believers before God has caused us to take great pains to make sure everyone is equal—and equally humble. Any overt seeking after power is a cardinal sin. I tell my anthropology students that the only way to get a leadership position in a Mennonite church is to deny three times that you want the job.

Mennonite leaders tend to arise charismatically (from certain lineages?) and, while they do not always flaunt their power over us, they influence us heavily with their names and their presence. Moreover, the use of power by ordinary folk in a Mennonite community can be more than a little deceptive. Relying upon the Mennonite preference for full consensus, we can wield significant selfish power in the veto. Indirect communication can be used to gain power, where direct communication would make us vulnerable.

Newcomers are understandably baffled, then angered, by the covert uses of power in Mennonite communities. They are sometimes labeled power-hungry because they are honest about wanting certain resources or positions. Their willingness to speak in personal and authoritative terms is offensive to indirect communicators. And they may be accused unfairly of being proud, while others are simply subtler about it. Once again, honesty is the solution, particularly regarding one's own needs and desires. It is not selfish to admit what you want. It is an act of vulnerability to do so.

Newcomers to the Mennonite church are understandably baffled, then angered, by the covert uses of power in Mennonite communities.

The kin connection: The most difficult barrier newcomers to the Mennonite community encounter is kinship connections. Mennonites are aware of this barrier. Jokes about "the Mennonite game" (tracing family connections to find a reason to talk to one another) abound. And our churches express concern that nonrelated Mennonites be more fully incorporated.

Furthermore, playing the Mennonite game is understandable. Every tribe on earth plays that game. After all, family is the most powerful connection humans have, and its strength can be used for good, such as to incorporate and care for people, as well as for bad, such as to alienate them. In fact, Mennonites' value of family often results in strong marriages, good care of children and making God the center of the home. I know more than a few newcomers, battle-scarred from the destruction of the family in American society generally, who have joined the church because they appreciate the health and strength of our families.

The problem comes when Christian people want to join our churches, only to discover that after 15, 20 or 25 years, or two or three generations, they are still considered newcomers. This is a serious problem. It indicates many Mennonites have confused faith with culture.

We Mennonites (all of us) are of one faith, not of one culture. Further, that faith must bind us together with a strength far beyond that of our biological ties. We are first and foremost brothers and sisters in Christ's family and only secondarily members of our respective earthly families.

Our growth, as Christians and as a church, will depend on our ability to place our allegiance to Christ and our membership in God's family first. And that is most possible, actually, when we fully incorporate and learn from people of different cultural backgrounds.

Our virtues and our vices are often the same things. The dominant Mennonite culture is characterized by virtues such as timeliness, hard work, responsibility with money, good planning, self-control, humility and family orientation. These same virtues can be perverted into vices, making us driven, stingy, controlling, deceptive, secretly proud and clannish. But this should not surprise us. All of humanity suffers under the curse of self-centeredness that can turn virtues into vices.

The Christian solution is to place ourselves under the headship of Christ and subject ourselves to the rest of the body of Christ, particularly as it is shown to us by the newcomers to our local churches. Only then can the virtues of our culture be balanced and complemented by the virtues of other people's cultures in coordination with God's plans for the kingdom.

Eloise Hiebert Meneses teaches anthropology at Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa.

Watch our language

Paulus Widjaja says we can learn from churches of people of color.

by Doreen Martens

Diversity? Unity? These seemingly opposite concepts are an issue for today's church as never before. Finding the right balance between them is tricky, says Paulus Widjaja, an Indonesian who serves as secretary to the Mennonite World Conference Peace Council.

"If we are blind to our diversity, we can end up easily in tyranny," he says. "But if we are blind to our unity, we can end up in anarchy."

To illustrate how ignoring diversity can harm the church, Paulus tells a story from *Alice in Wonderland* about a mouse who helps Alice when she finds herself lost in a huge pool of her own tears. Mention of a cat as they paddle toward shore frightens the wits out of the mouse, but an uncomprehending Alice keeps trying to persuade the mouse that cats really are quite lovable.

"Though Alice needs help, she dominates the relationship. She is the one who writes the scenario, ... who determines the language of the conversation, based on her own assumptions. The fact that the mouse speaks mouse language escapes her," Paulus says.

At last the mouse says, "Let us get to the shore, and I'll tell you my history, and you will know why it is I hate cats and dogs."

The cultural language gap between white churches and churches of people of color is often a lot like that encounter, Paulus says. Western assumptions that disregard our diversity can unintentionally offend. Listening more carefully to the "mouse" can be revealing.

He describes language that ignores and disrespects the perspective of churches of color:

1. The language of individualism: "This is my business and I can do it myself."

The Western emphasis on autonomy is not a value shared by Asians, for whom no personal or corporate decision—even marriage—is made without a complex web of relationships being considered.

For example, a quick decision (for Mennonite World Conference) some years ago to give official recognition to certain Indonesian congregations in California caused great turbulence in Indonesia because it happened without the expected consultation. That episode reveals the tension between a relationship-oriented system and the Western task-oriented system, Paulus says.

"I can understand when white people get frustrated when they have to work together with people of color, because it takes a long, long time." In contrast to a goal-driven process, "in our system we like to lobby first, then talk a lot, and when everybody is comfortable, then you go forward."

2. The language of operationalism: "Do it according to certain techniques."

In the West, mission is often understood as a matter of strategy and procedure, where the measure of success is quantitative. Reducing people of color to statistics—and labeling them in certain ways—is often hurtful.

Asian Christians more naturally speak in stories than numbers, a fact Paulus noted at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in 1997: Asian speakers from indigenous churches told anecdotes about changed lives, while reports given by Westerners played to expectations by highlighting statistics. A focus on numbers also devalues slow, hard work, such as that among Muslims.

"Modalism," the idea that the way things are done in a particular church in a particular area can and should be translated to another church in another area, has often had negative effects on churches of color, Paulus says.

3. Language of egalitarianism : "Do the same thing as equals."

This model emphasizes independence, particularly with money. Inevitably those who share deep spirituality or who model endurance amid persecution are not considered the equals of those who can contribute materially.

"This kind of language has really hurt our feelings, and it brings conflict in church-to-church relationships, especially between churches of white people and churches of people of color," Paulus says.

We also need to recognize our fundamental unity—a value not always recognized in a "cineplex culture" where there is a plethora of choices.

We need to recognize that (1) the local congregation is not the church of Christ by itself but one part of the whole; (2) koinonia—a structured sharing of life—is the mark of the church, local and universal; (3) expressing unity requires more than just occasionally assembling for a special event but must be a day-to-day reality.

How to build unity

Paulus Widjaja suggests some practical ways to build unity:

1. Move from being a "conference" to being a "communion"—a real encounter.
2. Internationalize personnel, as multinational corporations do, to communicate with cultural sensitivity.
3. Follow the offering plate principle: Once a gift is given, it belongs to all equally. The Mennonite World Conference Global Sharing Fund and the Gift Sharing Project, in which congregations around the globe can share their experiences and wisdom, are some examples.—*Doreen Martens*

Doreen Martens lives in Mississauga, Ont. This article is adapted from one she wrote in the Spring 1999 issue of Panorama, *the newsletter of Pacific Southwest Conference, which she edited at the time.*

Edmonton City on a Hill project strives to help Mandarin-speaking newcomers help themselves

EDMONTON—Urban life is nothing if not fluid, which means ministry in an urban context must be the same. Such is the case in Edmonton.

Canada's fifth-largest city, Edmonton was selected as this year's City on a Hill by the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions, which awarded a grant to the city's four Mennonite congregations. Part of the grant was to be seed money for children's ministries at Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church.

Instead, outreach has taken a different turn.

Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church, which turned 12 this year, has between 20 and 25 adults who are members or attend regularly plus eight children. The people in the church speak Cantonese.

But more and more Chinese immigrants in the last five years speak Mandarin. As pastor Ken Tse and his wife, Jodi, were trying without success to find a children's ministries worker, they began to notice some of the needs of Mandarin-speaking newcomers. A number were coming to the church on weeknights to attend job-skills workshops held by staff from the nearby Mennonite Centre for Newcomers.

Thus began the Immigrants Interaction Network, for which Jodi is now program coordinator. The program has continued the job-training workshops while adding Saturday-evening interest groups such as cooking. Many of the newcomers are well-educated professionals who didn't cook in their home countries because parents or household helpers did it.

Another of the Saturday evenings focuses on "daily living in North America," Ken says. "For example, when people come here, they don't know about winterizing their cars."

Other topics have included health, handling stress and parenting skills. "In China, when the elders speak you are supposed to listen—quietly," Jodi says. "But in North America, you are taught [in school] to ask questions."

Some of the City on a Hill grant money is being used to buy ingredients for the cooking classes and to advertise the entire program, especially the job-skills workshops, in local Chinese-language newspapers.

A main goal of the program, Jodi says, is to get the people to develop a network from which they can draw the resources—both physical and emotional—to help themselves. Edmonton Chinese began reaching out to Mandarin-speaking newcomers in January. The congregation discovered that although most of the people were not Christian and had no church experience, they were longing for some kind of community.

> In China, when the elders speak you are supposed to listen—quietly. But in North America, you are taught [in school] to ask questions.
>
> *—Jodi Tse*

GCMC-Mennonite Church USA

Two girls from Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church sing at a worship celebration. Supported by City on a Hill grant money, the Cantonese-speaking congregation is reaching out to Mandarin-speaking immigrants to the area.

"Almost immediately we began hearing, 'If your church had Mandarin translation, we could come visit,' " Jodi says.

By February, several members were providing simultaneous translation.

Jodi herself spoke Mandarin as a child, but that stopped when she went to school. She began working to regain her skills about a year ago. That allowed her to help one Mandarin-speaking woman come to faith.

"I was able to pray with her in Mandarin," Jodi says. "It's not me, it's the Holy Spirit."

Two more people have come to the faith-seeking class that Ken leads.

The congregation sees the work of the Immigrants Interaction Network as friendship evangelism, Jodi says. "The whole congregation is really focused on this; it has really pulled us together," she says. "It's Menno Simons' 'true evangelical faith.' "—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC-Mennonite Church USA News Service*

TransFormation
Mennonite Church USA • October 2001 • Issue 9

Lost and thankful

At Nashville 2001, I have never seen so many people admit to being lost! Nashville's Opryland Hotel and Convention Center was the host site for the Mennonite Church Assembly and Youth Convention. The myriad of hallways, rooms, porticos, shops and meandering paths through rainforest environments was both beautiful and overwhelming.

For at least part of the week, everyone was equally lost. Maybe it was this shared posture of humility that set the stage for what God's Spirit wanted to create in Nashville.

Franconia Mennonite Conference executive Phil Bergey (right) with Pakisa Tschmika of Mennonite World Conference.

For some folks, highlights included the significant unity reflected in the votes to determine the vision and identity of Mennonite Church USA. For others, it was the direction of a missional church that takes the Great Commission seriously both "across the street and around the world." For still others, it was the expansion of relationships to include counsel and learnings from sisters and brothers around the world.

For me, highlights included the holy experiment of blended worship styles, consistently and creatively stirring together the beauty and richness of many traditions from the increasingly colorful diversity of Mennonite Church USA. We still have a long way to go, but we are on the way.

Overall, Nashville was a week to be hopeful for Mennonite Church USA. Maybe it was our awareness of how easily each one can get lost. Maybe it was the prayer intercessors who prayed throughout the week. Maybe it was the prayers of the global and local church.

Maybe it was the week's focus on Col. 3:12-17 that encouraged us to clothe ourselves with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Maybe it was the words of this text that encouraged us that whatever we do, "whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Awareness that we can easily get lost, compassion that others are found, thankfulness to God for the reconciling peace in Jesus Christ and commitment to follow Jesus in the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. This is the foundation for building the Church. This is the Gospel.

Phil Bergey is the conference executive for Franconia Mennonite Conference. This article first appeared in the September 2001 issue of Franconia Conference News.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Being Mennonite and missional

I love the Mennonite Church and the heritage of faith I have received. Mennonites as a whole have a reputation for wholesome family life, peace and service, concern for justice, communitarian values and practices, a healthy critique of popular culture—and the list could go on.

More than 100 people gathered for the pre-Assembly Nashville 2001 Peace Gathering, "Bring Forth the City of God." Here Raul Bogoya, community pastor of North Goshen (Ind.) Mennonite Church talks with Edwin and Betty Good from Murphy, Idaho.

People seek out our church as an alternative expression of faith. Sometimes they are disappointed in the reality they discover among us. But many stay and find in Mennonites a fresh breath of spiritual and sociological life they wish to adopt for themselves.

We have much at stake in terms of our self-image and the image we hold with some scholars and observers of human society. Many of us carry this sense of Mennonite identity deep within us.

If we make the Great Commission central, one price we may pay is that our image will be tarnished. Will we remain the alternative people about whom books and movies are made? Can we be a welcoming people no longer defined by our biological family systems and ethnic foods and still be "true" Mennonites? Will we be held in high esteem if our Mennonite way of life changes? Is there indeed a "third way" that is also missional?

Are we truly ready to be Mennonite and missional?

A common fear among us is that we might sell out to evangelicalism, to popular Christianity; that we might exchange our birthright for the proverbial mess of porridge and no longer be true Mennonites. Are we ready to pay this price?

Surely there are other implications for our churches if we truly make the Great Commission our central emphasis. One issue relates to authority and approaches to leadership, and how these might change as professionalism molds our lives and we no longer exhibit the humble, self-effacing qualities that in former years characterized our leaders. Might our leadership style for church planting and mission shift to a more assertive style and still be true to our Anabaptist faith?

I am confident a focus on the Great Commission will bring many positive results in terms of the kingdom and in the transformation of lives. We may discover ways of being Mennonite that are fresh and exciting, and our faith may become more attractive and fruitful in our world.

But there are risks we must face honestly. As Jesus said, we need to count the cost lest we begin building and later decide we can't go ahead and the house remains half-finished. Then we may be better off if we had not begun. Personally, I am committed to moving ahead with this Great Commission emphasis; I am also aware that mission is no innocuous venture.

In the 20th century, mission was the source of much renewal in many of our congregations and conferences. Some would say our efforts overseas were a mixed blessing, imparting both the gospel of Jesus Christ and elements of Mennonite culture (not to speak of the gospel of Western culture with its accompanying glitter).

As North American Mennonites, we managed to survive 20th century missionary outreach and maintain continuity with the historic faith of Mennonites. My sense is that in the 21st century it will be more difficult to hold these together. Are we truly ready to be Mennonite and missional?

Maybe, just maybe, our sisters and brothers in the Southern Hemisphere who found faith through our 20th century missionary efforts will now be able to help us sort out our questions and to embrace a fresh missionary consciousness for the 21st century. In that I find hope.

Jim Lapp is conference minister for Franconia Mennonite Conference. This article is excerpted from "Being a Missional Church: Implications for Mennonite conferences and congregations," in the Summer 2001 issue of DreamSeeker Magazine.

Mennonite
Church
USA

TransFormation is published by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, 421 S. Second Street, Suite 600, Elkhart, Ind. 46516.
Phone: 219-294-7131 • Email: rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org • Ron Byler, editor • October 2001
Page one – Mary Lou Cummings; Page two – David Hiebert; Page three – Merle Good.

Printed in U.S.A.

Firstfruits Funding System for Mennonite Church USA begins to take shape

The formation of Mennonite Church USA gives us, says The Giving Project coordinator Mark Vincent, "a special gift of God's grace to increase our efforts in cultivating generosity, to bring leadership in stewardship education and to bring funding patterns more in line with the biblical history of God's people."

In the Mennonite Church USA funding system, Mennonite World Conference will receive firstfruits contributions from the MC USA Executive Board on behalf of Mennonite congregations. Here, Rainer Burkart (left), Secretary of the Faith and Life Council of MWC, talks with MWC Executive Committee members Fimbo Ganvunze (center) of the Congo and Hugo Moreira (right) of Uruguay in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Firstfruits Giving: Funding our Vision Together is a three-part Sunday school curriculum for congregations who want to know more about the biblical basis of the new funding system for Mennonite Church USA. The system is built on four basic propositions:

- God wants a relationship with us.
- In addition to bringing God the first and the best, the rest is managed in generous ways that honor God.
- In the history of God's people, the gathering place was the collection point for giving.
- Households, congregations and ministry organizations are the temporary caretakers of financial resources. Each should be an example of generosity, even as they care for their own well-being.

Rather than focusing on what a congregation or ministry organization needs, the firstfruits system builds on the opportunity for the giver to give. Funds move from household to the congregation, to various ministry organizations and to the world beyond—all in the name of Christ.

The Firstfruits Funding System is rapidly moving from concept to reality. Just as rapidly, resources to help congregations, conferences and ministry organizations make the transition are finding their way to the web (see accompanying list of resources), including a brief video that introduces the theology and method of the funding system. Area conference offices will receive copies of the video for their use.

By the end of the year, more complete documentation of the funding system with conference specific content will be completed.

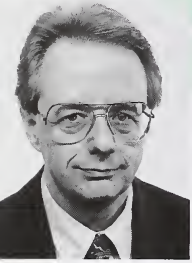
Installing a new funding system throughout the congregations, conferences, ministry offices and the denomination is a complex task that will take some time. The Mennonite Church USA executive office is currently working with each area conference office on transition steps.

In the meantime, congregations should continue to contribute to the work of their conferences and churchwide ministries just as they always have, until new information is received. Congregations who want to know more about how to participate in the new funding system should contact their conference office.

Firstfruits Funding System resources available

- ***Firstfruits Giving: Funding Our Vision together*, a three-part Sunday school curriculum, available on the web at www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org**
- ***Generous Living* newsletter available in *Equipping***
- ***Firstfruits* teaching video available from your area conference**
- **Narrative Spending Plan worships available through MMA's Stewardship Education Center**
- ***Responding to God* giving system available through MMA**
- ***A Stewardship Manifest* available at www.GivingProject.net**

For the love of Christ



My pastor preached about it the first Sunday after September 11. He repeated the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:44. Jesus commands us to love our enemies.

Does anyone question any longer that there are people in this world who hate us and would persecute and harm us? We do not have a choice about whether to have enemies, only on how we will regard them.

Loving our enemies takes us toward a destination beyond making peace. We can promote justice for all people, but loving our enemies looms even larger on the spiritual landscape than working for justice.

We realize now that our enemies are among those "across the street and around the world" to whom Christ calls us to bear witness of his love and salvation. Regardless of the terror they may bring upon us, as wrong as that may be, we are to love them the same as friends. This is for the sake of the saving purpose of Christ.

It is part of our desire to be like Christ.

We have the same fears and temptations as others. But our response of Christlike love for our enemies transforms us, even as it can transform the enemy as well.

Since September 11, my favorite benediction now carries new depth of meaning as I tremble at Jesus' command to love my enemy: "Now to him who by the power at work within (me) is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all (I) can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20).

Jim Schrag

Jim Schrag
Executive Director
Mennonite Church USA

Identifying with Mennonite Church USA

A symbol representing the emerging Mennonite Church USA in all its parts was developed soon after St. Louis 99. "It was a privilege to be given the task of representing the spiritual heart of a people," says Glenn Fretz, Waterloo, Ont., who designed the symbol for use in Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

The symbol represents the Spirit in the form of a dove, announcing the coming of God to us. As Mennonites, we recognize the centrality of Christ as proclaimed in scripture, revealed through the Holy Spirit and discerned in Christian community. The symbol reflects these basic affirmations.

Following the official formation of Mennonite Church USA at Nashville 2001, many congregations, conferences and agencies are incorporating the new symbol into their stationery, envelopes, brochures, bulletins and newsletters. For most applications, the symbol should be reproduced from proofs or electronic files available from Mennonite Church USA.

Typeface choices, logo formats and applications, use of color and materials plus other useful information about MC USA's visual identity system are included in the booklet "Visual Identity Guidelines," available free of charge from the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board Office of Communications, 316-283-5100, email info@MennoniteUSA.org, 722 Main St., P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347.

For assistance—free of charge—in adopting the Mennonite Church USA visual identity for your congregation, conference or agency, contact Glenn Fretz at gfretz@home.com. Or visit the Mennonite Church USA website at www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org and click on "News and Information" for a link to the visual identity guidelines.

Mennonite
Church
USA

Beninese can bank on Christian witness

MBM-supported loan program helps improve lives

JESUKO, Benin—In this fishing village of 900 people, Moise Ahlonsou knows that an investment as small as $20 can transform people.

Sitting in his two-room shack perched on stilts above Benin's largest lagoon, 31-year-old Ahlonsou is working with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) to release the shackles of economic dependency faced by families in Jesuko.

Working with MBM West Africa coordinator Steve Wiebe-Johnson, Ahlonsou has created six community banks. Each bank makes available loans of $20 to $100 to support small fishing and commercial enterprises by residents.

"If you want to start something, you have to start it small," says Ahlonsou, a member of an African-initiated congregation and a student at the MBM-founded Benin Bible Institute. "Our goal, first of all, is to reach the people who are the most poor. They want to change the condition of their lives themselves."

His neighbor, Theresa Aulessi, with a loan of about $20, bought ingredients to prepare a cassava-and-sauce dish for sale in a nearby market. That established an ongoing source of income to feed her family. But that's not all.

"Through contact with people of the community bank, she had the gospel shared with her and became a Christian," Wiebe-Johnson says. "The fact that the community bank was open to her whether she was a church member or not made her open to the gospel."

Although named to honor Jesus, Jesuko ("Jesus' village") provides little economic hope for those who live above Lake Nokoue near Cotonou, the nation's largest city. In a country where annual per capita income is about $400, there is little promise of a bright future.

When not on fishing boats, Jesuko's children play barefoot in the waste-infested shallow water along the lake's shoreline. Only six miles from Ganvie, a world-famous waterfront community of 30,000 known as the "African Venice," Jesuko seems a world apart.

MBM provides as much as $500 per bank. With several hundred loans, the banks have a 95 percent repayment rate. Many loan recipients are committed Christians whose offerings support the church in their home communities. Others, like Aulessi, have become Christians as they have experienced a church that cares about their physical as well as spiritual needs.

"These loans completely change people's outlooks on their lives," Wiebe-Johnson says. "A small loan fills them with hope and optimism about the future. A small amount transforms whole situations. … It is incredible to me to think that a loan smaller than $20 can change a person's life that much."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

CASA
DIRECTOR MCC-INDIA

MCC

Solid as a rock

Fern and David Gerber, Mennonite Central Committee co-country representatives in India, pose by a plaque in Jalia Diwani, which was devastated by a January earthquake. The plaque names David and MCC for their efforts in rebuilding the village; MCC contributed $300,000 for building materials. The plaque is on the foundation stone for Jalia Diwani's new water tank. Rubble is still being cleared from Jalia Diwani, so the new village is being built about half a mile from the original site.

MWC at domestic violence conference

Mennonites and Brethren in Christ have much to offer in addressing domestic violence, says a Mennonite World Conference (MWC) representative to a conference on violence against women.

Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, who recently started a Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Colombia, attended the Aug. 23-28 event in Dundee, Scotland. The World Council of Churches invited representatives from 15 Christian denominations to the conference to tackle issues of domestic violence.

"The time is right for our members to use our wonderful Anabaptist theological heritage of peace and nonviolence and give witness to this hurting world," Albrecht said in her report to MWC. "It became clear to us that we must work in the preventive as well as the intervention stage so this type of abuse does not happen in our churches."—*MWC News Service*

Candlemakers want to turn up the heat

Ontario firm joins plan to help refugees, cut deforestation

> **This is where God wants me to be. … I'm called to be in business, and that means doing the best job I can.**
>
> *—Ted Loewen*

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont.—Walk in any direction away from most any refugee camp anywhere in the world and you will see the same thing—deforestation.

People who live in the camps at first don't have to walk far to get firewood for cooking and heating. But the longer they stay, and the more who come, the farther they have to walk to cut down trees for fuel. After a while, a ring of devastation can encircle a refugee camp for miles, scarring the land for decades.

But there might be a way to save the trees, think Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) and Niagara Falls-based Newville Candle Company.

The idea, called Green Heat, combines waste wax, left over from the candle-making process, with waste wood chips and shavings from local furniture manufacturers. The mixture is put in a paper cup and lighted. It's much like fire starters for fireplaces, but is large enough to boil water.

"We know it works," says Ed Epp, who directs MEDA's international operations. "Now we just need someone to try it overseas, to see how it stands up to real use in a refugee camp.

"We think it's a win-win. People can cook food, trees can be saved, and waste in North America can be reused."

Such concerns are part of Newville's work. Co-owners and brothers-in-law John Klassen and Ted Loewen say the way they run their business should reflect their faith in God.

"I believe that the most important thing to God is people," Klassen says. "If people don't matter to us, then we're in big trouble."

Says Loewen, "This is where God wants me to be. … I'm called to be in business, and that means doing the best job I can."

That isn't lost on their employees. "They don't seem money-hungry here," says Travis Landry. "Sure they have to make a profit to stay in business, but this place is about more than just that. It's not just about money."

Not that such an approach has caused business to suffer. Since Klassen and Loewen bought Newville in 1998, sales have jumped from $1.2 million to $4.4 million. The company annually produces as many as 10 million candles for customers such as Avon, Martha Stewart and Estee Lauder as well as for its own line, called Trillium.

Newville has a contract to supply torch candles to the 125 U.S. cities that will participate in next year's Winter Olympics torch relay.—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

MEDA is an association of Christians, in business and the professions committed to connecting faith and work in a needy world. MEDA members share their faith, abilities, and resources to address human needs through economic development. MEDA invites applications for the position of:

President

The President serves as the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for carrying forward the policies and directions of the MEDA Board of Directors. The position will involve frequent travel and will be based in one of MEDA's North American offices (Waterloo, ON; Winnipeg, MB; or Lancaster, PA). The start date is flexible, ideally to begin in mid-2002.

Qualifications:

Successful leadership of a senior management team
An understanding of MEDA's organizational culture, goals and objectives, including a strong Anabaptist faith commitment (ideally within a Mennonite community) and ability to integrate faith into business and development
Economic development experience, as demonstrated through overseas work experience, or academic studies in international development
Active role in one or more businesses; ideally involving work with a board of directors
Understanding / experience directing marketing and fundraising, activities in a business or non-profit
Experience with membership association is an asset

For more details, visit our web site: www.meda.org.

MEDA

Please send your resume to:
Presidential Search Committee c/o Kim Pityn
fax: (519) 725-9083; e-mail: kpityn@meda.org

New mission director formally installed

HUBBARD, Ore.—Former Mennonite Board of Missions president Stanley W. Green was installed Sept. 30 as the first executive director of Mennonite Mission Network (MMN), the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA.

The installation ceremony, conducted at Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, was held during the first MMN board meeting.

Guest speaker Jim Brenneman, Green's former pastor at Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church, drew parallels between the need to search for lost sheep and the search for victims in the rubble of the World Trade Center following the Sept. 11 attacks.

"We will work on through the day and on into the night until we find that last soul who is lost," Brenneman said. "Our fire fighters in New York City are doing that to find anybody under the rubble. That's our call as the kingdom of God. Might we imagine ourselves in that kind of search."

Green was appointed in March as MMN executive director, concluding a five-month search process.

"I commit myself and this agency to work as carefully as we can until those from the mountains outside Kabul and in Mazar-e Sharif [Afghanistan] to the great towers of Manhattan come to know the blessings of salvation that are there in God's love for them," Green said.
—Tom Price of MMN News Service

God's people...
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NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL

Education presentation

Barbara Moses, principal of Philadelphia Mennonite High School, addresses the Mennonite Educator's Conference at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Md. The Sept. 27-29 event drew 650 people from 33 Mennonite-affiliated elementary and secondary schools.

Prayer Books to Use — or to Give

Simple Prayers of Love and Delight

The prayers in this book are about living faithfully for God. They spring from the words and wisdom of Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterite writers, hymnal bookplates, prayer books, and samplers.

Gently colorful paintings reminiscent of folk art fill the pages of this book with warmth and delight.

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The brief Christian prayers in this collection are both bold and poetic. Their language is refreshing and without pretense, so basic and yet so profound.

The painterly illustrations gleam in sun-stoked golds, blues, and reds.

Together, the colorful text and drawings make this a comforting companion.

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MCC volunteers start 2001-2002 canning season

AKRON, Pa.—Coming from four countries and three continents, the crew of Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) portable meat canner left Oct. 10 for Sterling, Ohio, to start the 2001-2002 canning season.

The crew—Alfredo Berg of Bagé, Brazil; Waldemar "Bob" Berg of Bad Oeynhausen, Germany; Ernst Dueck of Boquiron, Paraguay; and Joshua Stucky of Moundridge, Kan. —were commissioned Oct. 9 in a service at MCC offices in Akron. The canner will stop at 33 locations in 11 states and two locations in Ontario through April, processing as many as 4,000 cans of beef, turkey, pork or broth each day.

Since the canning started in 1945, more than 18.5 million pounds of meat have been canned. Last year's efforts yielded a record-breaking 680,000 pounds.—*MCC News Service*

Celebration marks conclusion of MBCM work

ELKHART, Ind.—Sixty-five people gathered Oct. 12 at Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart to celebrate the 30-year ministry of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM). The program included presentations by Ross Bender, the agency's first executive secretary; Everett Thomas, president from 1989 to 2000; and current board chair Marcus Smucker. Carlos Romero, MBCM minister of youth from 1990 to 1999, was master of ceremonies.

MBCM was created in 1971 as part of the reorganization of the Mennonite Church. On Feb. 1, 2002, its programs and ministries will be transferred into the offices of Congregational Life, Ministerial Leadership and Convention Planning, all under the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

The celebration was part of the final meeting of MBCM and Commission on Education board and staff. Some COE ministries will also be transferred to the Office of Congregational Life.

EMU peace institute gets new director

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Janice Moomaw Jenner has been appointed director of the Institute for Justice and Peacebuilding, the applied practice and research component of the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg.

Jenner, who joined the Conflict Transformation Program staff in 1998, had previously been the program associate for networking and grants. Before that, she and her husband, Hadley Jenner, had served seven years as Mennonite Central Committee's country representatives in Kenya.

this date in Mennonite history

Oct. 30, 1994— The first Burkina Faso Mennonite pastors are ordained, giving birth to an autonomous national Mennonite church.

This holiday season
give a gift that speaks to the true meaning of Christmas

Nurture another person's faith—or even introduce someone to Jesus Christ—through the pages of *The Mennonite*.

Just for the holidays, *The Mennonite* is offering a 6-month gift subscription for $20 ($28 Cdn.). Or send someone a 1-year gift for just $33 ($46.80 Cdn.)—10 percent off the regular gift rate. All holiday gift subscriptions will begin with *The Mennonite*'s Jan. 8, 2002 issue, if reserved before Dec. 28. This will be the premier of *The Mennonite*'s new look!

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Workers

Mantay, Alexander, Halle, Germany, has begun a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment with Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Ga.

McCullough, Karen, Bluffton, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a parent aide for Excap in Dallas.

McKitrick, Matthew, Aurora, Colo., is beginning a one-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Service and Learning Together (SALT) assignment in Swaziland.

Metzler, Sarah, Chelsea, Mich., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Lusaka, Zambia, as a teacher and community development worker.

Moyer Lehman, John and Barbara, in July concluded a co-pastorate at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church. Barbara was installed Oct. 7 as associate pastor for nurture and pastoral care at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Moyer, Laura, Green Lane, Pa., has begun an 11-month MVS assignment as medical clinic coordinator at Bread for the City in Washington.

Murcia, Saul, Akron, Pa., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Akron as co-director for Latin America and Caribbean program.

Pauls, Marita, Remseck, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a child-care worker in Dallas.

Pellman, Nathaniel, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Tanzania as a teaching instructor.

Read, Jodi, Clearwater, Fla., in January will begin a two-year MCC-Mennonite Board of Missions assignment in Santiago, Chile, as intern coordinator.

Reha, Matthew, Tiskilwa, Ill., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with Habitat for Humanity in Dallas.

Richer, Chris, West Unity, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Richer, Julia, West Unity, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher's aide at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Rissler, Grant, Front Royal, Va., has begun an 11½ -month MVS assignment as a paralegal in Harlingen, Texas.

Roe, Sean, Northbend, Wash., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with Puget Soundkeeper Alliance in Seattle.

Schildt, Laura, Marietta, Pa., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Mexico promoting women's and children's health.

Schmidt, Jason, Whitewater, Kan., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Lusikisiki, South Africa, in community development.

Schowalter, Simon, Drusweiler, Germany, has begun a two-year MVS assignment with Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Ga.

Schrag, Elizabeth (Libby), North Newton, Kan., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Belfast, Northern Ireland, as a restorative justice researcher and administrator.

Sharp, Donald and Loretta, Davidsville, Pa., are beginning two-year MCC assignments in Akron, Pa., as host and hostess.

Siegrist, Ryan, Elizabethtown, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a staff assistant in the Entrepreneur Loan Center of San Luis Valley Christian Services in Alamosa, Colo.

Stucky, Joshua, Moundridge, Kan., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as a canner operator.

Swartzendruber, Anthony, Shickley, Neb., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an urban farm organizer for the Kansas Rural Center, Topeka, Kan.

Swartzendruber, Heidi, Denver, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a youth counselor aide for Seattle Emergency Housing Services.

Swartzendruber, Steven, Hesston, Kan., is beginning a one-year MCC SALT assignment in Mexico City.

Symns, Mark, Longmont, Colo., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a medical assistant at the People's Clinic in Boulder, Colo.

Thieszen, Rachel, Henderson, Neb., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher's aide at Friendship Daycare Center in Hutchinson, Kan.

Weber, Valonne, Dakota, Ill., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a program assistant for Boys and Girls Club in Fresno, Calif.

Wiebe, Andrea, Friendswood, Texas, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher assistant at Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis.

Wolfer, Barry, Lebanon, Ore., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with the Development Resource Group in Alamosa, Colo.

Wyse, Lowell, Camden, Mich., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a maintenance worker and physical education teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Yoder, Amanda, Wellman, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment with the Alamosa (Colo.) Summer Migrant Program and Even Start of Alamosa.

Yoder, Bob, was ordained for ministry Aug. 12 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Yoder, Joseph, has been named director of Menno-Hof, the Mennonite and Amish information center in Shipshewana, Ind.

Births

Bromley, Kloie Elizabeth, Sept. 15, to Karrie Bromley, Middlebury, Ind.

Brown, Jacob Andrew, Sept. 25, to Michael and Nancy Hochstedler Brown, Elkhart, Ind.

Buehler, Erica Helen, Oct. 2, to Mark and Marilyn Zimmerman Buehler, Bolton, Ont.

Cassel, Sara Grace, Oct. 4, to Michael and Laurie Derstine Cassel, Green Lane, Pa.

Croll, Rachel Kathryn, Sept. 28, to Jason and Dannelle Sautter Croll, Telford, Pa.

Driscoll, Helena Maudene, Sept. 1, to Darin and Katie Dick Driscoll, Bloomington, Ill.

Fitzgerald, Seth Tanner, Oct. 3, to Michael and Jennifer Miller Fitzgerald, Bridgewater, Va.

Flinner, Abigail Marie and Emrick Paul (twins), Oct. 4, to Matt and Kris Miller Flinner, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Lam, Clinton Jacob, Oct. 4, to Dorwon and Bette Weaver Lam, Mount Solon, Va.

Lowe, Rachel Elizabeth, Sept. 27, to Tony and Cyndee Showalter Lowe, Timberville, Va.

Miller, Caleb James, Sept. 29, to Carol and Karlton Miller, Harrisonburg, Va.

Miller, Elyse Catherine, Sept. 13, to Troy and Pam Lipely Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Rychener, Landon Douglas, Aug. 21, to Ken and Kristen Rensberger Rychener, Medina, Ohio.

Yoder, Deborah Kafui Frey, Oct. 2, to Bruce and Nancy Frey Yoder, Cotonou, Benin, West Africa.

Marriages

Derstine/Wyble: Stacey Derstine, Line Lexington, Pa., and Kent Wyble, Doylestown, Pa., Sept. 22 at Doylestown Mennonite Church.

Guest/Kehler: Randy Guest, Winnipeg, and Leigh Anne Kehler, Altona, Man., Sept. 3 at The Forks, Winnipeg.

Holler/Meng: Cathy Holler, Springs, Pa., and Ravy Meng, Elizabethtown, Pa., Aug. 18.

Maehare/Tryon: Megumi Maehare, Kurume, Japan, and Aaron Tryon, Altona, Man., Sept. 13 at Kurume.

Moyer/Nice: Henry Moyer, Souderton, Pa., and Ella Nice, Souderton, Sept. 22 at Souderton.

Deaths

Buller, Hilda Epp, 80, Henderson, Neb., died Sept. 26. Spouse: Henry H. Buller (deceased). Parents: Jacob F. and Sarah Dalke Epp (deceased). Survivors: children Arnold, Henry, Ronald, Marlys Oestreich; 14 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Eichelberger, Alie, 81, Wayland, Iowa, died Oct. 1. Spouse: Barbara Eichelberger. Parents: William and Katie Eichelberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Roger, Dean, Lynn, Sharlene Reichenberger, Lisa; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Horning, Grace Nissly, 84, Lancaster, Pa., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Titus H. Horning. Parents: Christian and Barbara Herr Nissly (deceased). Other survivors: children Barbara Weaver, Nancy; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Burial in Lancaster.

Roth, Violet Stutzman, 77, Milford, Neb., died Oct. 3 of complications following heart surgery. Spouse: Delmer Roth. Parents: David and Phoebe Stutzman (deceased). Other survivors: children Yvonne Bontrager, Russell, Lenore Meyer, Cecil; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 6 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Scott, Susie Petersheim, 71, Honey Brook, Pa., died Oct. 4 of pneumonia. Parents: Samuel and Ada Zook Petersheim (deceased). Survivors: children Deborah, Clarence (C.J.); two grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 8 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Stroud, Marion, 79, Wadsworth, Ohio, died Oct. 4 of cancer. Spouse: Robert Stroud. Other survivors: children Christine Breeze, Allis Simpson, Lucy Cliburn, Sara Grimm, Robert Jr., James, David; eight grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 8 at First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth.

Unternahrer, Ralph, 60, Wayland, Iowa, died Sept. 30. Spouse: Martha Speake Unternahrer. Parents: Jacob and Mayme Leichty Unternahrer (deceased). Other survivors: children Jason, Cynthia Hammen, Rita Colover; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Wiens, Elmer J., 80, North Newton, Kan., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Leola Siebert Wiens. Parents: Jacob and Katie Siemens Wiens (deceased). Other survivors: children Pamela Hodson, Timothy, Keith, Nancy Wiens Graf; seven grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 1 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Yoder, F. Berneice Reber, 85, Milford, Neb., died Oct. 1 of cancer. Spouse: Paul Yoder. Parents: Cora and Noah Reber (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Carolyn, Steven; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

classifieds

- **Reunion of Eastern Africa connections,** Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church Fellowship Building, ***July 26-28, 2002***. For questions or suggestions, contact Milt and Ann Troyer, Box 5, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-5143; <mktajt@valkyrie.net>.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***administrative assistant*** to assist the special projects coordinator and the representative to Middle East/West Asia. Part-time position begins January 2002. Responsibilities include scheduling, correspondence, filing and proofreading.

  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline: Nov. 16, 2001.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has full-time ***science*** position for 2002-2003. Includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined. Active Christian commitment, membership in the Mennonite Church preferred, open integration of Christian Scripture and faith into teaching and personal life, dedication to effective teaching and love for young people are desirable.

  People interested in learning more about this position or in applying should call J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 540-432-4502; or write to 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **The Board of Governors of Conrad Grebel University College** invites applications and/or nominations for the position of ***president***. The president is the chief executive officer of the college and is responsible to the Board of Governors. Conrad Grebel University College is the Mennonite residential and teaching college of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, affiliated with the University of Waterloo, and offering programs of study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Preference will be given to candidates who stand within the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, who have earned a doctorate and who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. All inquiries will be kept in strict confidence. The appointment will be effective Jan. 1, 2003.

  Applications and resumes should be received by Jan. 31, 2002, and should be addressed to Chair, Presidential Search Committee, Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** invites applications for a full-time faculty position in a master's degree program in ***counselor education*** with school and community counseling tracks, beginning fall 2002. The role includes director responsibilities. Doctorate in counselor education and Virginia LPC required. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of excellence in teaching in a Christian liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, practice and teamwork, and who are supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Please send letter of application describing teaching interests, administrative qualifications, counseling experience, vitae, scholarly papers, all graduate transcripts and three letters of recommendation to Provost Beryl Brubaker, EMU, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Review of completed applications will begin immediately and will continue until position is filled.

- **Caretaker position** at ***Drift Creek Camp*** in Siuslaw National Forest near Oregon coast. Hosting, maintenance, cleaning. Call Ron Sears, 541-996-3978; email <driftcreek@harborside.com>.

- **Fairview Mennonite Church**, Fairview, Mich., is seeking full-time ***lead pastor*** for a small-town church. Attendance 250-300 with opportunities for growth and outreach.

  Contact Reuel Detweiler, <rdetweiler@m33access.com>, 989-848-2305.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***special projects coordinator***. Part-time (50-60%) position begins January 2002. Relational abilities, follow-through. Cross-cultural experience. Self-starter, team player. Research, develop and implement designated projects that impact global missions.

  Contact Jeanette Hess at 717-898-2251 or <jeanetteh@emm.org>. Application deadline: Nov. 16, 2001.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces faculty openings beginning fall 2002:

  Communication: Ph.D. preferred in communication/media studies/electronic media production/Internet development; master's required. Primary teaching assignment will be within the communication major with emphasis on writing for new media, designing interactive experiences, Internet/web production and communication theory.

  Early childhood education and literacy: Ph.D. in early childhood education and/or literacy with experience in teaching early education and literacy required. Responsibilities include: teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in early childhood, diverse needs and literacy; supervising field-based program experiences; advising undergraduate and graduate students; providing leadership for the EMU Early Learning Center.

  English: Ph.D. required. Seeking candidate with expertise in 19th- or 20th-century British literature. Preference will be given to candidates with secondary expertise in creative writing.

  Nursing: Ph.D. preferred; master's degree in nursing required. Education and experience related to medical-surgical nursing required. Responsibilities include clinical teaching in acute-care settings and student advisement. Skills in interpersonal and public relations, leadership and management, curriculum development and problem solving are essential.

  Philosophy and theology: Ph.D. in philosophy or related discipline preferred. Seeking a candidate with expertise in the intersection between philosophy and theology. Primary teaching assignment focusing on the philosophy component of a philosophy and theology major, including history of philosophy, contemporary philosophy, critical thinking, philosophy of science, ethics and social philosophy.

  World religions/missions: Ph.D. (or equivalent) or A.B.D. required. Expertise in cross-cultural and Two-Thirds World issues required. Seeking a candidate with commitment to Anabaptist-Mennonite theological and missiological perspectives, with significant cross-cultural ministry/scholarly experience. Teaching assignment will include the core course in world religions for all Bible and religion majors and other missions/religion/anthropology courses. Must be willing to teach additional Bible and religion courses within the general education curriculum.

  Spanish: Ph.D. in Spanish required or master's degree with a related doctorate. Seeking a candidate with competency in teaching language, civilization and literature for a growing Spanish program.

  Education: An earned doctorate in education required; A.B.D. considered. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in curriculum instruction and action research; mentoring graduate students; supervising field-based program experiences; advising undergraduate and graduate students. Successful candidates must demonstrate effective teaching and an ability to do scholarly research.

  EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>; web <www.emu.edu>. Review will begin Nov. 30, 2001. EMU reserves the right to fill the positions at any time or keep the positions open. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

The Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA is seeking candidates for the following positions (location negotiable but eventually located in one of four offices in Newton, Kan., or Elkhart, Ind., or new East and West Coast offices):

- ***Assistant director, Witness and Peace Ministry, Office of Congregational Life*** (half- to full-time). This staff person oversees lay leadership development for congregational mission, including ministries of witness, service, peace and justice, and stewardship and networks with churchwide and area conference mission, peace, environment and stewardship groups.
- ***Assistant director, Community Life Ministry, Office of Congregational Life*** (half- to full-time). This staff person oversees lay leadership development for governance, care and healing, spiritual discernment and guidance, and conflict resolution and networks with churchwide and area conference groups related to pastoral leadership, care and healing, spiritual direction and mediation.
- ***Peace advocate, Office of the Executive Director*** (up to half-time). This staff person leads and organizes peace and justice advocacy work on behalf of the denomination and works with inter-Mennonite and ecumenical peace and justice groups.

Applicants please send letter of interest and resume to Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, <rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org>, or 219-294-7131, by Nov. 15.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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To witness for peace in a time of war

by Karl S. Shelly

At the very moment that I was leading my congregation in Communion and recalling the broken body of Christ, my government was dropping bombs of retaliation on Afghanistan. The two symbols could not have been more stark—one of suffering love and the other of deadly vengeance.

Here we were, on World Communion Sunday (Oct. 7), remembering the nonviolent Messiah and singing a song of hope: "Goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, and life is stronger than death." But how, I wondered, does one speak of light in the time of such darkness? How does one witness for peace when large segments of my community find the message of peace an affront?

These days the voice for peace has become small and unwelcome. National leaders have been nearly unanimous in calling for war, newspaper columnists mock pacifists, and letters to the editor ridicule those who dare speak for peace. In the face of this rhetorical onslaught, I soon felt defensive, then angry. The real enemy was the people with whom I passionately disagreed.

Yet I sensed the need to back away from the self-righteous belief that I hold the truth and need not listen to others. I listened beyond the words of those calling for vengeance. I read between the lines of letters clamoring for war.

I heard three messages from my "enemies."

1. Don't minimize the enormity of this tragedy. Some have insisted the only appropriate remedy for the events of Sept. 11 is to bomb the murderers and their friends back into the Stone Age. I believe this stems from a recognition that the attacks on New York City and Washington were horrific. In the face of such a terrible deed, any words from would-be peacemakers that appear to gloss over the thousands of lost lives in order to get to a historical analysis of this conflict will be rebuked. There is little patience in the mainstream for those who skip past the stories of human suffering and the tales of heroic courage to speak geopolitically.

2. Don't divide us. One particularly harsh letter to the editor in our local newspaper urged all those not ready to support this country in war to move to Afghanistan. Even behind this blustering is a fervent longing for unity. We as a nation have been divided for years by harsh political partisanship, culminating in a bitterly contested presidential election. We have also been divided by race and class. Now, in the wake of this national tragedy, there is a strong sense that we have reached beyond what separates us to experience a connectedness as fellow Americans. "Don't undermine or treat callously this precious unity" is what I hear.

3. Don't shortchange the call for justice. A local politician said: "Pacifists think that what is needed is for the United States to simply make friends with the Taliban—that playing nice will dissolve anti-American terrorist cults. They couldn't be more misguided." Although obviously uninformed about nonviolent responses to violence, this statement shows an intense desire for justice. He worries that those who preach love and mercy will neglect the need for justice. In essence he is affirming the old peace activist's adage: "No justice, no peace."

These three messages, hidden behind the rhetoric of those seemingly antagonistic to peace, are ones I need to hear. And while I don't support the conclusions they draw, I can support the underlying concerns. I affirm the call to grieve the innocent victims and salute the courage of rescue workers, I share the desire to build on what unifies in our quest for peace and healing, and I join the call for accountability and justice for the wrong that has happened. I do this both because these concerns are legitimate and because it is tactically important to do so. If we peacemakers haven't heard and acknowledged the genuine concerns of those with whom we disagree, our message of peace doesn't have a chance.

Listening does not guarantee that our concerns will be heard equally. And there is a danger that listening can become an end in itself, leaving the mainstream voices heard but never challenged. The temptation to only listen is strong in a time when those witnessing for peace are labeled immoral, unpatriotic or evil.

With prayer, we must find a Spirit-led way to witness for God's shalom in the world. We must find a path that is neither self-righteous sloganeering nor immobilized listening.

That path includes speaking words of lament and comfort, as the psalmist did, and sharing the prophetic vision God has given us through Jesus—a vision of loving enemies and turning cheeks, seeking justice and building peace, casting out hatred and standing with victims wherever they are. We are to speak this vision boldly and sensitively. And we are to speak this vision confidently, assured that goodness is stronger than evil, love is stronger than hate, light is stronger than darkness, and life is stronger than death.

With prayer, we must find a Spirit-led way to witness for God's shalom in the world. We must find a path that is neither self-righteous sloganeering nor immobilized listening.

Karl S. Shelly is co-pastor of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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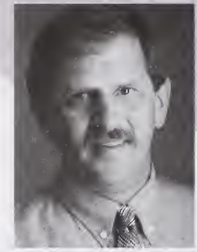

Everett J. Thomas

A flesh-and-blood church

This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.—Luke 22:19b

Indonesian Mennonite leader Paulus Widjaja thinks Mennonite World Conference (MWC) should change its name (page 7 sidebar). Specifically, he suggests that this global fellowship of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ sisters and brothers should move from being a "conference" to being a "Communion." This is an idea whose time has come. There are at least three compelling reasons why such a change could lead us to the unity Widjaja suggests.

1. The word conference in our era denotes an organization that holds congregations together. It may be the skeleton structure of the body, but it does not denote the flesh and blood that make the whole body visible.

Other Christians use words for their structures that sound odd to us. We will probably never use "diocese" or "presbytery" to define parts of our organizational flow charts. But all Christians know what Communion is. By using this word for our world body, we are not suggesting that only Mennonites and Brethren in Christ are in true Communion. Rather, we signify that we are a small part of the universal Christian fellowship that repeats the rituals instituted by Jesus during that Last Supper.

Each time we take Communion we declare that Christ's body is alive and well and ministering in the world today.

When we drink of the cup, we participate in a radical act of reality. When we eat the bread, we testify to a truth that has stood for centuries against the changing philosophies of history. Each time we take Communion we declare that Christ's body is alive and well and ministering to the world today.

"In this meal, the church renews its covenant to be the body of Christ in the world and to live the life of Christ on behalf of others," says the commentary section of Article 12 in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

To be the body of Christ in the world today means that we are organically connected to our sisters and brothers in the MWC fellowship and constitute a small but lively part of the global Christian community.

2. By accepting this change requested by some leaders from the global South, those of us in Europe and North America move into a new level of mutuality with these sisters and brothers. In other words, we should do it simply because some important voices are asking for the change.

Our sisters and brothers in the global South care less about the policies and structures of our task-oriented systems and more about relationships and careful consultation. The church they wish to create is based on testimonies to the way God works in lives today rather than on quantifiable numbers that prove our church programs are cost-effective.

MWC was created by Anabaptist leaders in the West. However, those constituencies are now a minority within this global community. Consequently, the challenge in this century will be to shift perceptions of ourselves as having all the resources to control this global family. As we are willing to subordinate our preferences and traditions, we will honor the counsel of those now in the majority and those who carry leadership.

3. By making such a change in title from conference to Communion, the emphasis on global assemblies is reduced. If a conference is generally understood to be a gathering where members confer with each other, then the word conference is increasingly inadequate for the dreams that MWC leaders carry. Expressing unity does require more than occasionally assembling for a special event and must become a day-to-day reality (page 7).

A simple word change from conference to Communion would carry many levels of meaning. It would change the relationship we have with MWC leaders in the global South. It would remind us that we are connected to others at a physical, body-tissue level beyond international organization. It would signify the presence of a flesh-and-blood church that is alive, well and ministering in a broken and hurting world. It would be a sign of Christ's presence today.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

November 6, 2001

Reach out
nd pay someone a visit

page 4

6 I found a community of peace

10 Provisional membership for congregations?

12 From cookies to car washes

20 Learning from those who know suffering

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Prayer concern

I felt uncomfortable about the potentially misleading photo caption accompanying “Living Water Rises in the Windy City” (Oct. 16), about the church I pastor in Chicago. The caption originally submitted by Mennonite Board of Missions News Service read: “Living Water Community Church in Chicago, a congregation of prayer, finds healing and prophetic ways to invite God into challenging situations, such as this one where Ian Davenport and his family ask for prayer as Ian prepares to enter the military.”

I would not want readers to draw the conclusion that our church does not actively witness to Christ’s call to be people of peace who exercise love toward our enemies. It’s hard for a brief photo caption to capture the complexity of what it means to minister to youth with whom we have minimal contact and influence and who have few resources for pursuing higher education other than the military.

Living Water Community Church was faced with a dilemma when Ian Davenport, a youth with ties to the church, announced during sharing time that he was leaving for the military in a few days. As the congregation gathered around Ian and his extended family, we were challenged to find Spirit-led ways of praying without condoning Ian’s decision. We prayed that Ian would be an instrument of God’s peace and a channel of God’s healing love in the military. We prayed for Ian’s protection and for God’s presence with Ian and his family. And we prayed for Ian to keep a tenacious hold on the truth and to grow in his understanding of God’s plan for his life.

Please join us in praying that we as Anabaptist Christians continue to find ways to call urban youth to the gospel of peace and point them to alternative paths to higher education other than the military.—*Sally Schreiner, pastor, Living Water Community Church, Chicago*

Now or then?

In “God’s Reign Is Present” (Oct. 9), Loren L. Johns writes: “God’s reign is present. Get your life out of tune with that old ‘realism’ and invest in this new reign of God that is just now being realized.” If God’s reign is already present, what did the apostle Paul mean when he wrote, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1 KJV)? It seems to me that this is speaking about the future. What is Johns’ explanation?—*Alfred E. Sauer, Moundridge, Kan.*

War and peace

I’m taking a stand to say that I’m not in favor of going to war. I refuse to be included with the majority of Americans who think that it is right to back our president in bombing “terrorist-harboring” countries. I’m not for promoting terrorism or terrorist acts. There are many innocent lives lost when one country bombs another country just for the acts of a number of evil people. We just need to find the terrorists and hold them responsible. Don’t hold everyone in one country responsible.

Our country thinks that it is so great and that we would never be termed a terrorist-harboring country. Well, our government sends weapons and money to Central American countries so guerrillas can kill innocent people. During the Cold War, our country supplied weapons to Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden to fight against the Soviet Union. The United States supplies weapons to Israeli soldiers so they can also kill innocent people. The United States runs a school for the training of terrorist soldiers to kill people the United States doesn’t like. These countries know the United States’ unspeakable acts in Third World countries.

Why does it take a big tragedy to get the richest country in the world to pour out gifts to help people in times of loss? I am a hard-working single mother of one who has barely enough money to support my son and me, but I take some of my hard-earned cash and donate it to a charitable organization to help get rid of the tragedy that occurs in other countries—and our own—every day. We need to do something now before it is too late.—*Elizabeth Kingsley, Bluffton, Ohio*

Some have suggested that the Sept. 11 attack is justified as a response to U.S. foreign policies. This opinion, in effect, justifies the actions of the terrorists in the taking of many innocent lives. Tell the fathers and mothers, the husbands and wives and the children of the victims that it was justified for terrorists to take the lives of their loved ones.

Over the years, the U.S. government and its citizens have contributed billions of dollars of food and medical aid to countries and people in need around the world. We do this out of the abundance that God has given us. In addition, we have sent thousands of missionaries around the world not only to spread the gospel but to teach others how to feed themselves and improve their living conditions. When

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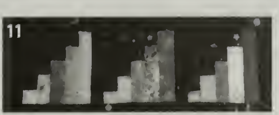
Vol. 4, No. 42, November 6, 2001



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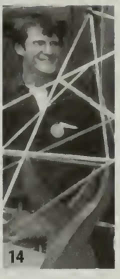

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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

ay readers say

there is a need, the government and many times U.S. citizens jump into action to help. The world has come to expect this. I fail to understand how these actions justify an attack on civilians who were going about their daily routines.

A response that suggests that the attacks were justified is totally inconsistent with the peace stance that we Mennonites are so proud of. Instead of bashing the United States, let's be thankful for the blessings that God has given us and continue to use them to help and support others.—*Scott Cassel, Auburn, Ind.*

My first thought on Sept. 11 was for all those who died so suddenly without having accepted Christ and knowing they were going to heaven. I have my own parish, for I have 11 married children and 37 grandchildren. Because of that horrendous day, I have spent hours writing my testimony and sending it to my family. I wrote the Bible verses that have carried me through the ups and downs of my 74 years and told the stories of what was happening in my life. I pray my writing will make a difference in someone's life and that Christ will live in their hearts as they face whatever happens.—*Mary Hull Naumoff, Orrville, Ohio*

Thank you to Randy Kratz for his clear-thinking letter in the Oct. 16 issue. We make the mistake of imposing Christian values on governmental systems when we should be rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. Clearly we are to be the salt in the world, but that pertains to our individual lives in our individual walks. Admonishing our government to behave like a Youth Evangelism Service team is silly and diminishes our real message to the world, the peace to be found in Christ.—*J. Clarke Jordan, North Wales, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Keep on visiting

Musings on the power of persistence in the outreach of the church

by Andrew R. Shelly

Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only

The church often neglects those who most need its ministry. Some ministers spend almost all their time at the desk while neglecting people who are inactive or never come to church. One of the biggest problems for the church is what to do about people who do not fit successfully into regular society.

My mother was busy with a blind husband and four children at home, but every Thanksgiving she invited a hobo to come into our house for dinner. She sent me to the shack near the Pennsburg (Pa.) Reformed Church to invite a man. I brought him to our house for Thanksgiving dinner. My mother also led in the conversation.

She was an amazing woman, but if every church family brought just one person in, what a difference it would make.

The value of persistence: My father, a minister, needed to make a living during the 1920s and '30s. For about 12 years, he was on the road as a salesman. He went out day after day after day. When my father couldn't go out anymore because of his blindness, my brother Paul and I went out to sell merchandise. We went to a heavily populated section of a town, and he started at one end and I at the other, and we worked toward each other.

Those people would not come to church on their own. They needed to be visited. Most of them had no concept of what the church was about.

Reaching the difficult to reach: When I went to Bedford County, Pa., as a home mission pastor during my college years, few people in the community attended church. I went from house to house, calling on total strangers. I said, "I'm the new minister on the hill. We'd be glad to have you come to church." Over a period of time, the attendance went up from about 15 to more than 90.

I visited a man who never came to church. I didn't just say, "Why don't you come?" We visited, and he said people didn't realize he only had one cow, and his family needed that cow for the milk. He said that if he went to church, and the cow got loose, they would lose that milk.

I said to him, "I'm sure that's a problem, and I suppose many people in the community face that similar problem. I hope you will find a way to take care of the cow and also come to church."

The next week I visited him again, never pushing or threatening him but listening to him. I kept visiting.

One Sunday morning the whole family came to church. And they came in the evening. And they came to prayer meeting.

I didn't form a committee to study why he didn't come. I didn't even analyze and solve his cow problem for him. He worked that out.

When I was in Hartford, Conn., for seminary study, another student and I visited every family in two census tracts, about 250 families in all. Those people would not come to church on their own. They needed to be visited. Most of them had no concept of what the church was about.

What I found most helpful was to literally visit everyone. Then no one feels singled out. This has worked in many cases.

In Kitchener, Ont., where I served a pastorate in the 1940s, I heard of a woman with three little boys who had moved into the area. Her husband had been in trouble with the law, had gone with other women and had divorced her. I went to see her and asked if she'd come to church if I came by to pick up her and the boys. She said yes.

Those children had little concept of what a church was like. At the end of the service, they enjoyed running in this new environment.

As I was shaking hands with people at the door, a woman asked me, "Rev. Shelly, did you notice those new boys?"

"Oh yes," I said, "Isn't that wonderful? They're in church."

She said, "Yes, but did you notice what they're doing? They're running around wild in the church."

"Yes, but they're in church, and they'll learn how to act."

When we talk about evangelism and the work of the church, we need to realize that we will not be successful in every case, and the secret is not so much in our telling people what they should do but in opening the avenues of conversation.

And they did. In 1984, when the congregation had its 60th anniversary, the woman and her three boys and their wives came to the banquet. She gave me a $200 check in appreciation. I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't intervened.

Meeting inactive people: Later I worked for Mennonite Biblical Seminary, which needed money desperately. I went house to house, business to business, farm to farm. I could usually make 40 calls in a day.

Once a person driving me around in Montana said, "This next place is antagonistic to the conference, to the church, to the seminary, and he's mad. Do you want to stop in?"

I said, "Yes, this job gets a little monotonous, and that might spark it up." As we drove in the long lane, I saw a man about 40 years old walking across the barnyard. I noticed a hangar for a small plane and said to him, "I see you've got a plane."

He said, "Yeah, would you like to see it?"

"Oh yes." We walked out, he talked about the plane.

I said, "I suppose you heard that I was around and what I was doing."

"Yes, I did."

I explained the need for ministers, missionaries, teachers and church workers. I said, "I'm giving people the opportunity to contribute to the seminary."

"I'll give something." He walked into the house and brought out a check for $100.

The point I'm making is that when we talk about evangelism and the work of the church, we need to realize that we will not be successful in every case, and the secret is not so much in our telling people what they should do but in opening the avenues of conversation.

The task of the church: The tragedy is that those who need the church most are sometimes dropped from the roster. One of the major challenges of a church is to continually visit both people who are inactive and those who are outside the church. All too often we expect the darkness to cure itself, and we sometimes drop members who are inactive instead of working with them.

Jesus came to die for sinners. As we visit people who do not go to church, we encourage them and invite them. Some of them will come.

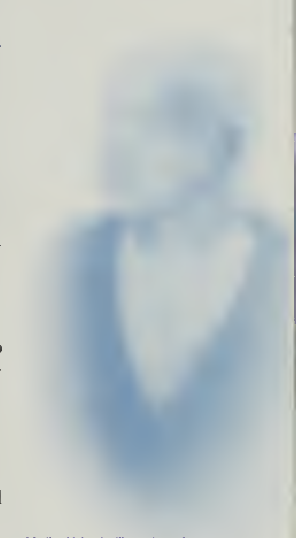
Sometimes people may be hesitant to invite people they think won't fit in. They may have virtually no knowledge of the gospel. It should be possible to minister to longtime members and new believers.

Newcomers ask questions, and church people can think through where they are going. In the New Testament, believers welcomed people who were outside the church, while they also helped everyone grow in the grace of God.

The church can do many things in regard to crisis situations. Once, when I was interim pastor in Newton, Kan., I went to church to pick up a paper. When I walked into the office, the telephone rang. A woman on the other end said, "My son lives in Newton, and tonight at midnight he will be evicted from his house."

I got his address and telephone number and told her I'd call her back in an hour.

I went to the house, and indeed he was being evicted. I called a lawyer and I said, "What can we do?"



Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only

As we visit people who do not go to church, we encourage them and invite them. Some of them will come.

He said, "Were they given a written notice of eviction?" The man said no. The lawyer said: "Then they can't put him out. He must have a three-day written notice. I'm going to call the sheriff at once. He will not be evicted."

At the age of 88, I know I will never be pastor of a church again. I also know that only the guidance of the Holy Spirit can lead us to a proper prioritizing of what we do. Still, I call for a rebirth of conviction in persistently searching out and helping people the Bible refers to as the "least of these."

Andrew R. Shelly was a longtime pastor and church leader in the General Conference Mennonite Church. He lives in Newton, Kan.

why I became a Mennonite

fourth in a series

I found a community of peace

One of the hallmarks of Mennonite faith is that members choose to join the church. It is a voluntary community. We offer a series of articles by members of Mennonite congregations who write about why they chose to become Mennonite. We hope these stories help us all reflect on our own relationship with the new Mennonite Church.—**Editors**

by Lois Barrett

I became a Mennonite during the Vietnam War. The war had upset my cozy world. I began my years at the University of Oklahoma taking for granted that U.S. citizens were supposed to support their government. The Vietnam War changed all that. I helped a psychology professor in his research on attitudes toward the war. We discovered that the more people knew about the war, the less likely they were to support the war. I tried to learn more about the war. I participated in student protests against the war. I was anxious because my boyfriend and my brother were in danger of being drafted (both eventually received conscientious objector status). I did not feel I could trust the government any more.

Church was important to me, and I was looking for theological grounding for my growing peace convictions—something I wasn't finding in the denomination in which I had grown up. Through a variety of connections with Mennonites in Oklahoma City and Norman, Okla., I discovered a peace church, and I discovered Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS).

People in the congregation didn't talk about community all that much; they just lived it. They assumed that being a Christian community (not just a collection of individual Christians) was the way you did church.

I came into MVS in Wichita, Kan., intending to stay only a summer. I stayed a year. I began attending Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church. Here was a congregation that was unapologetically against the Vietnam War. Here was a congregation that every year had a school for peace. I began learning all I could about the Mennonite theology that was the foundation for a peace stance. I read *The Mennonite*, which came to our unit house, and its editorials about war and peace. This was what I had been looking for.

But I found something else as well. The way I would have said it 30 years ago was, I found community. I found community not only in the voluntary service unit. I found community in the congregation. People in the congregation didn't talk about community all that much; they just lived it. They assumed that being a Christian community (not just a collection of individual Christians) was the way you did church. And even if I wasn't related to any of them, they adopted me, invited me for dinner and gave me responsibilities in the congregation.

After my year in MVS, I changed directions. Instead of going to graduate school in psychology, as I had planned, I went to seminary, a seminary of the denomination in which I had grown up. I had expected I would be able to study peace theology there, but no one seemed able to direct me to any sources. I left after one semester, came back to Wichita to join a Mennonite intentional community that was forming, and a few months later I became a member of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church.

Later that year, I began work as associate editor of *The Mennonite*. I embraced the Mennonite tradition with a passion often found only in those who do not grow up in the tradition, a passion that does not take the tradition for granted.

The Mennonites I knew in 1971 did not always articulate their understanding of the church. I had to learn what Mennonites understood the church to be by observation and participation as much as by conversation or writing. But over the years I have discovered that the following modifies my first observations of "church as community."

Courtesy photo

Lois Barrett

Church is the people of God. I discovered that Mennonites just assume that being Mennonite means you have an identity that supercedes other identities (for example, being an American or a member of the Rotary Club). My husband says that in the small, mostly Mennonite town where he grew up there was the understanding that their ancestors had been driven out of a number of countries in the past and that could happen again in America. If so, they would move to another country. Church identity outlasts national identity.

Church members extend love and accountability to each other. The first Sunday I attended Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, someone stood up in front of the congregation to confess sin and ask forgiveness. I had never seen this before. This was clearly a different kind of church from what I had known previously. I later came to understand that Christian discipleship was a lifelong process. Following Jesus meant loving each other, caring for one another and guiding each other along the Christian way. When relationships were damaged, it was important to repair them—and that often meant holding each other accountable in love.

The church is an alternative community with another set of allegiances and another set of practices. The Mennonite tradition understands that the church behaves differently from the dominant culture at a number of key points. Christians are to love enemies rather than seek revenge or participate in the military. Christians are called to simplicity of lifestyle rather than consumerism. Christians are called to seek the welfare of the whole rather than individual privilege. Being the church means being different for Christ's sake.

Christians can't live differently from the dominant culture without the church. Being different from the surrounding society is not easy. At various points in Mennonite history, it has led to persecution, even martyrdom. The church as community holds people up in times of suffering.

The church is a sign of the reign of God and a witness to the reign of God. None of the three Mennonite congregations of which I have been a part have been perfect signs of the reign of God. But they understood that they were called to point to the reign of God, by word and deed and by the nature of their life together to give others a glimpse of life in the reign of God. The church is a sign of the future God intends for the whole world. The church is called to participate in God's mission of reconciliation for the world.

The church is a sign of the future God intends for the whole world. The church is called to participate in God's mission of reconciliation for the world.

Of course, I could not have articulated this understanding of church when I first became a Mennonite—and neither could most of the Mennonites I knew. But I sensed it even then. And I began trying to live it out and trying to shape communities that lived it out. This understanding of the nature of the church has so shaped me that I have chosen as my vocation helping the church proclaim and be a sign of the reign of God.

Lois Barrett is a member of Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita, Kan. She is executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Late October

by Raylene Hinz-Penner

is making its demands in this yellow time, everything hoarding
its last-gasp color for the slash and burn: this morning, the yellowest
rose, the fullest rose yet, allowed to hang over the garden fence
unruffled in a hazy autumn morning's perfect still—so quiet
the leaves, in straight descent, clattered, crisp against the concrete,
the brick streets, the wooden deck, and landed heavy on the human
head, like wet droppings or some early unpredicted snow.

What is needed now, the manuals will tell us, is a sweeping,
that painful pruning that marches itself toward a five-foot rose
and hacks the canes down to the bone, tough mean love
that diminishes a summer's growth to a six-inch stalk to be buried
in a mound of soil and mulch against the Kansas winter, cold
this year, they say, extra cold. Move the containers of boxwood
against the south wall, sheltered, full sun, maybe they'll winter over.
Scrape the brilliant garnet sweet gum leaves from still-ferny ground-
cover, mash into black bags and the dank dump of brown compost.

Our government, too, this late October, is whooping wildly toward
winter in its plan to excavate desert bunkers, exploding, smoking
the earth, while its citizenry hunkers at home, cut back early
into winter's dark, devoid of natural autumnal light; we hold out
our hands at night to the brown figures on our TV, thinking to grasp
something late—shriveled apples, too soon fallen, our dreams, or those
other messages delivered to us by day with a gas-mask, everything tainted.

Raylene Hinz-Penner lives in Newton, Kan.

Q&A with Mennonite Church USA leaders

Executive director Jim Schrag (top) and moderator Ervin Stutzman answer questions for our readers. You may send questions for this feature to themennnonite@mph.org, or call 800-790-2498.

We hear about a shortage of pastors for congregations. What is Mennonite Church USA doing about this shortage?

A churchwide leadership development initiative is being launched through the Office of Ministerial Leadership. This effort will attempt to mobilize families, congregations, church schools and churchwide agencies in a broad-scale effort to encourage youth and others to consider whether God is calling them to pastoral ministry and other leadership roles in the church. In addition, existing leadership development efforts will be strengthened, and, where needed, new programs will be initiated.

Now that the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church are going to form Mennonite Church USA, are there plans to begin conversations with other Mennonite groups about additional mergers in the future?

No, there are no plans to invite other Mennonite denominations to join or merge with Mennonite Church USA. First of all, there is plenty of work to do to complete the current merger. It will take some years before we fully reap the benefits of all the hard work invested over a number of years. Second, it would likely be difficult for a smaller church to join a larger denomination, especially as a latecomer.

Of course, merger is only one way of demonstrating unity in Christ. Other ways are to co-sponsor church events, cooperate on mission or publishing projects and/or jointly own church institutions. And then, of course, there are those relief sales all over the country… .

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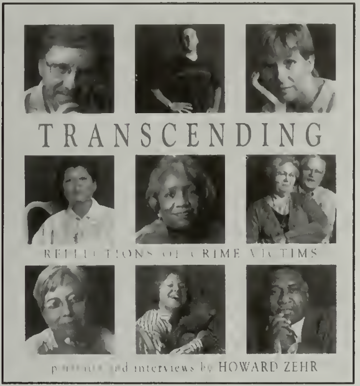
TRANSCENDING
REFLECTIONS OF CRIME VICTIMS
portraits and interviews by HOWARD ZEHR

TRANSCENDING:
Reflections of Crime Victims
portraits and interviews by Howard Zehr

- Are victims of crime destined to have the rest of their lives shaped by the crimes they've experienced? ("What happened to the road map for living the rest of my life?" asks a woman whose mother was murdered.)
- Will victims of crime always be bystanders in the justice system? ("We're having a problem forgiving the judge and the system," says the father of a young man killed in prison.)
- Is it possible for anyone to transcend such a comprehensively destructive, identity-altering occurrence? ("I thought, I'm going to run until I'm not angry anymore," expresses a woman who was assaulted.)

Howard Zehr presents the portraits and the courageous stories of 39 victims of violent crime in ***Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims***. Many of these people were twice-wounded: once at the hands of an assailant; the second time by the courts, where there is no legal provision for a victim's participation.

"My hope," says Zehr, "is that this book might hand down a rope to others who have experienced such tragedies and traumas, and that it might allow all who read it to live on the healing edge."

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Provisional membership option for congregations could be temporary solution for conference woes

I think the provisional clause will give us time to explore some other associations and still feel connected.

—Leon Shirk

In an effort to maintain unity within their constituencies, several area conferences are looking at a method used by Mennonite Church USA—provisional membership, but this time for congregations with concerns about joining the new denomination.

Atlantic Coast Conference has become the first to provide such an option. With a 69 percent vote, delegates on Oct. 27 approved the conference becoming the 11th charter member of Mennonite Church USA. That action included offering a two-year grace period for congregations on the fence to decide their future affiliation.

All current conference congregations will be considered full members of Atlantic Coast and Mennonite Church USA unless they request provisional membership from the conference's executive committee, says conference minister Warren Tyson. Provisional membership would not place any restrictions on congregational participation in the conference.

"It's basically a time for congregations to work through any reservations they may have," Tyson says.

He estimates that as many as eight of the conference's 41 congregations might consider provisional membership.

One of those is Bethany Grace Fellowship in East Earl, Pa., which has declared it will not join Mennonite Church USA. "I think [provisional membership] is something we will be able to work with," says pastor Leon Shirk. "I think the provisional clause will give us time to explore some other associations and still feel connected."

Virginia Conference, which is scheduled to take a vote on denominational membership in January 2002, is also considering a proposal to offer provisional membership for congregations. The plan is still in draft form and has yet to be reviewed by Conference Council, Virginia's top board. As many as 10 congregations of Virginia's 73 congregations could opt for provisional membership, says conference minister Owen Burkholder.

The idea for some sort of alternative membership has also been floated in Southeast Conference, which last month approved joining Mennonite Church USA as a charter member, despite some opposition within the conference.

The Mennonite Church USA bylaws stipulate that denominational membership is attained by virtue of area conference membership. But the bylaws do not state that conference membership automatically translates to denominational membership.

"It's within the prerogative of the conference," says Mennonite Church USA executive director Jim Schrag.

But he urges that conferences set a deadline on provisional membership, at which time congregations need to decide to participate fully or withdraw. "We have no intention of [permanent] provisional membership," Schrag says.

The Mennonite Church USA membership requirements are consistent with the current Mennonite Church polity. The General Conference Mennonite Church has allowed congregations to be members of either an area conference or the denomination but not both. But Schrag says that polity has been de-emphasized in recent years.

"This [Mennonite Church USA] membership practice pretty much evolved over the last couple of decades," he says.—*Rich Preheim*

New era but same issues for CLC

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—In their first meeting after this summer's landmark delegate gathering in Nashville, Tenn., and the approval of Mennonite Church USA, Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) representatives found themselves still wrestling with the old issues of membership and homosexuality.

Topics for small-group discussions included variations of area conference and denominational membership, the appropriateness of a Nashville workshop on homosexuality, and pastors who lead congregations out of the church.

One plenary session focused on the role of the CLC in theological discernment of such issues. "Our thinking is part of who we are and what we do together," Indiana-Michigan representative Mary Ellen Meyer reported from her table's discussion.

Other representatives were more hesistant. "[CLC] is not a seminary," Pacific Northwest delegate Jim Wenger reported from his table's discussion. Western District representative Debbie Schmidt said CLC should not be viewed as a "theological court of final appeal."

The meeting also included sessions on missional church, denominational funding, denominational office locations and concerns of people of color.—*Rich Preheim*

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Focus

Every student a peacemaker

Mary Yoder Holsopple

First, a story from inside the war zone of Uganda. They set up their roadblock in front of our house. I watched as they extorted milk from a child delivering the family's only source of income to the market. I was filled with righteous anger. I confronted the soldiers. The child was allowed to pass—minus a glass of milk.

Fast-forward fifteen years to North Side Middle School in Elkhart, Indiana. A twelve-year-old girl pleaded with me to support her decision to stay in the gang that she had joined two years previously. As she so eloquently said, "They are my only family, the only ones who will always be there for me. The only people who will love me no matter what I do." Why do kids need to join a gang to find love and a sense of belonging?

Now in 2001 we are faced with a "war on terrorism," as the U.S. tries to confront a faceless enemy.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." For me this means bringing the presence and peace of God to everyday situations, no matter where I am or how difficult the situation. It means listening to the pain of others, and rejoicing with those who are rejoicing. It means being a messenger of Good News in a world sometimes torn apart and in seemingly hopeless situations. It means listening to people grapple with why God allows "bad things happen to good people."

We are all called to seek justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God—no matter what our profession or where we are living. That's why I'm involved in the Peace and Justice Collaborative,* a joint effort of AMBS, Goshen College, Goshen, Ind., and Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich. These three schools are drawn together by a common commitment to the biblical teachings of shalom.

Soon after the attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., the Collaborative helped to sponsor a paid advertisement in our local newspapers calling on our government to respond to the terrorist attack with love rather than hatred. We were overwhelmed by the number of people who supported this effort and welcomed an opportunity to make their voices heard.

We also heard from people who did not agree with us. One man made his way into my office at AMBS. I welcomed him and assured him that I wanted to be in conversation with people who have a different view. We spoke for an hour and a half. Neither of us worked at changing the other's position. I worked hard at understanding his. As he left he sighed and said, "I feel so much better."

Is this what it means to be a peacemaker? What would happen if every student who graduates from AMBS, and from Goshen College and Andrews University sees herself or himself as a peacemaker, firmly rooted in the biblical teachings of peacemaking, no matter where they live or what their profession? Imagine.

Mary Yoder Holsopple, M.S., is director of the Peace and Justice Collaborative of AMBS, Goshen College and Andrews University.

**See p. 2 for more on the Collaborative*

Inside

Peace studies in the context of a seminary

Add a social work degree to peace studies

Peace studies in the context of a seminary

Ted Koontz

It is an odd thing for someone whose doctorate is in international relations to teach at seminary. Perhaps it is doubly odd for a Mennonite to do this, given our historic aversion to "politics" and to the main subject of study in international relations—war. And perhaps it is triply odd for such a person to teach at a ***Mennonite*** seminary. Yet, here I am. Why?

My early interests in questions of war and peace came in the context of the war in Vietnam and the threat of nuclear weapons. They combined theological/ethical interests sprung from my Mennonite roots with analytical interests in questions of why and how. Why do wars occur, and how, practically, might they be restrained or eliminated?

After seminary study focusing on ethics and working in Mennonite Central Committee's Peace Section, I became convinced that Mennonites had given much attention to the normative questions concerning war and peace, but that very few Mennonites had studied the subject seriously from a descriptive (or social science) perspective. How can we make relevant ethical judgments if we don't understand the subject we are evaluating? Hence my doctoral work in international relations and political theory.

My plan was to teach political science, I hoped at a Mennonite college. I spent three years testing that option, along with two other options, as I taught one course each semester at Goshen College, the University of Notre Dame, and AMBS.

During those years I found my AMBS teaching clearly the most satisfying, largely because Christian faith was always the center of attention. I still try to insist on careful description and analysis of the realties of the world in which our faith must be lived. But especially in the Government Department at Notre Dame, I felt myself in a straightjacket, focused too narrowly on *description*. I care about war not mainly as an interesting subject to study, but as a problem to solve—and as a problem to understand not only in light of social science, but especially in light of Jesus Christ and his gospel.

Ted Koontz, professor of ethics and peace studies, was interviewed in the spring 2000 class, "Thinking Ethically," taught by Gayle Gerber Koontz.

What, you might ask, does this have to do with the AMBS Peace Studies program? Our Peace Studies program is different from the vast majority of such programs because it combines the interests I have described. Most peace studies programs have as their "home" disciplines the social sciences—politics, economics, social psychology, etc. Most such programs have their institutional home in a university. And most such programs have as their (often unstated) philosophical basis a kind of secular, liberal, humanism.

Peace Studies at AMBS, in contrast, finds its primary disciplinary home in biblical, historical, and theological study, supplemented with social scientific perspectives. Peace Studies here finds its institutional home in a seminary, a context formed by worship and serving the church. **Peace Studies here finds its basis in the explicit affirmation of Christian faith,** and a Mennonite understanding of that faith. I believe this gives us roots that are far deeper and far more life-giving, than those of much that has become known as "Peace Studies" over the last several decades.

I have found AMBS to be an liberating place, a place where I can put my passion for understanding and applying the faith together with my desire to understand the world accurately, assisted by the tools of social science. No straightjackets here!

Ted Koontz, Ph.D., is professor of ethics and peace studies at AMBS.

Peace and Justice Collaborative formed in 2000

The Peace and Justice Collaborative is a joint initiative of AMBS, Goshen College, and Andrews University, drawn together by a common commitment to shalom in our communities and in the world. The vision is to promote a culture of peace through countering the violence that plagues our communities and our world in order that our children and grandchildren can be nurtured in a world free of violence and injustice.

The mission of the Collaborative is

- to energize individuals and communities for social change especially as it pertains to peace and justice;
- to further articulate a biblical theology of practical peacemaking that empowers groups to effect change in their communities;
- to facilitate academic research into the efficacy of peace-building efforts;
- to disseminate information about the best practices in practical peace-building.

Mary Yoder Holsopple serves as the director; David Fast as administrative assistant. The Collaborative may be contacted at 219 296-6273; mholsopple@ambs.edu.

Members of the AMBS community made a commitment to peace as they sang the hymn, "I bind my heart this tide to the Galilean's side, to the wounds of Calvary, to the Christ who died for me. I bind my soul this day to the neighbor far away, and the stranger near at hand. . . ." They then pounded 6,800 stakes into the lawn next to the chapel as a symbol of mourning for the lives lost on September 11.

"May these thousands of stakes remind us of the enormous human cost when trust and understanding break down between people," AMBS President Nelson Kraybill said at the beginning of the service. "As Christians called to Jesus' way of peacemaking, we commit ourselves to work for healing of the nations."

As the stakes are removed this fall, a crocus bulb will be planted in each hole, so spring growth will be a reminder both of the loss and the promise of new life.

Add a social work degree to peace studies

"It's the only dual-degree program combining peace studies and social work that we know of," Loren Johns, AMBS dean, says.

This unique program is offered by AMBS together with Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich. In this program, students can earn a Master of Arts in Peace Studies degree from AMBS and a Master of Social Work degree from Andrews University in **three years,** instead of the four years it usually would take to earn the two degrees.

"This combination makes sense for people pursuing either degree," Loren explains. "Social work is the local expression of what peace studies students are committed to on the larger scale. Peace studies students are interested in the peace and justice issues with which social workers are directly affected."

For AMBS, adding the dual-degree option represents bringing together two equally important facets of study: The best of the biblical, theological foundation of peace studies with the practical, hands-on expressions of this theology of peace for people who are suffering or experiencing difficulties in their local settings.

Students apply the required courses of one degree to the electives of the other degree, thus completing the two degrees in three years. For students who pursue the combined program, a wider range of employment options is available.

For more information about this and the second dual-degree option, Master of Divinity and MSW, see http://www.ambs.edu/Dualdegree.htm

Collaborative offers conflict transformation workshops

"Mediation as a Life Skill" kicked off a series of five workshops on conflict transformation, coordinated by the Peace and Justice Collaborative.

The workshop at AMBS the last weekend of September gave participants practical skills in responding to conflict. The presenters were Carolyn Schrock-Shenk, associate professor of peace, justice and conflict studies at Goshen College; and Karl Shelly, member of the pastoral team of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, who also is a lawyer, mediator and AMBS student.

The four remaining workshops in the series, called "From Bystander to Bridge Builder," are:

- **Disagreement and Discernment in the Congregation: A Leader's Role,** Dec. 6-8, 2001;
- **Communication and Conflict Resolution in Intimate Relationships,** Jan. 4-5, 2002;
- **Basic Family Mediation,** Feb. 14-16, and Feb. 21-23, 2002; and
- **Leading a Conflict-Healthy Organization,** May 9-11, 2002.

Continuing Education credit is available from AMBS. For information, contact the Collaborative, 219 296-6273 or to go www.ambs.edu/conflicttransform.htm

Carolyn Schrock-Shenk of Goshen College and Karl Shelly (in background) were presenters at the first in a series of five workshops, "From Bystander to Bridge Builder," coordinated by the Peace and Justice Collaborative. Fifteen people participated in this first event, including professors, college and seminary students, a pastor and a clinical social worker.

President's Window

When a local newspaper interviewed me for a Mennonite response to recent terrorist attacks, I confess that I too much accented political analysis. I highlighted policies and behavior of Western nations that may have generated hatred from people elsewhere on the planet. Such analytical statements need to be made, but they are not enough.

Two weeks after Terrible Tuesday, students and faculty at AMBS knelt to drive thousands of stakes—one for each attack victim—into the ground to form a 120-foot cross on the lawn (see p. 3). We brought the brokenness of our world to Calvary. We hammered out anger, grief and hope around the empty cross of our risen Lord. Kneeling signaled our desire to be obedient to Jesus' way of suffering love even for enemies. It also was our confession that the empty cross represents God's first act of New Creation that some day will restore the world.

In October I was a Mennonite representative to a gathering of many denominations. Something within me resisted being introduced (kindly) as a "pacifist" and a member of a "Historic Peace Church." My commitment to nonviolence and peacemaking is unwavering. But I want to be known as a follower of Jesus whose hope for peace is grounded in far more than pacifist political strategies or denominational reflex.

Calling Mennonites a "peace church" could make it sound as though peacemaking is an odd trait of a small sect. It is not. Peacemaking is at the heart of the gospel, and nonviolence was the norm of the Early Church. I want others to know Jesus, to be transformed into witnesses and reconcilers by Holy Spirit power. Unless our peacemaking is rooted in Jesus and a careful reading of the Bible, others too easily can patronize us or dismiss our convictions as "just what you would expect a Mennonite to say."

At this time of international conflict, Mennonites need to be more than just a "peace church." We need to be gospel people for whom peacemaking grows out of a confession that Jesus is Lord.

– J. Nelson Kraybill

Flocking to AMBS
Like these fall visitors, you, too, can drop in for some nourishment at AMBS. Explore the possibilities: vigorous study, deepening spiritual growth, and enriching friendships – all at an affordable cost. We'll welcome you for a continuing education event, a January course, a semester, or a full program of study.

AMBS Panorama

Spring online course

Two courses are available online during spring semester, Feb. 4–May 22, 2001: **Pauline Theology and Ethics,** taught by Jacob Elias; **Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice,** taught by Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder.

For information, see: www.ambs.edu/olcourse.htm.

Spring weekend courses

For those who cannot come to campus for a full semester, AMBS offers several courses in intensive weekend sessions. Spring classes which meet on four weekends during the semester are:
Biblical Foundations of Peace and Justice, taught by Mary Schertz and Perry Yoder;
Christians and Political Order, taught by Dan Wessner, assistant professor of history and international studies at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

For information, contact the AMBS registrar at registrar@ambs.edu.

New Church Leadership Award recipients

Two students who entered studies at AMBS this fall received the full-tuition Church Leadership Award. These new recipients are:

(Robert) Eugene Brenneman, a student in the Master of Arts in Theological Studies program. Bob has most recently been in Guatemala, serving with Mennonite Central Committee.
Bryce Miller, a Master of Divinity student from Orrville, Ohio.

Leadership Clinics offer in-depth resources

On Friday, Feb. 1, 2002, AMBS is offering five leadership clinics:.
A. Preaching clinic, led by June Alliman Yoder
B. Bible study software for the pastor, led by Loren Johns
C. Worship planning for Lent, led by Marlene Kropf and Karmen Krahn Fehr
D. Paul's family legacy, led by Jacob Elias,
E. Pastoring the large congregation, led by Dorothy Nickel Friesen.

For information, contact the AMBS continuing education office, 219 296-6207, or www.ambs.edu/ContEd/pastors.htm.

Balanced budget again for AMBS

Contributions during the 2000-2001 fiscal year, including several large estate gifts, resulted in a balanced budget for AMBS for the year ending June 30, 2001.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Ryan Miller-p. 1; J. Tyler Klassen-p. 2; The Elkhart Truth, used by permission-p. 3 top; Steve Echols-p. 4 top; Mary E. Klassen-p. 3 bottom, p. 4 bottom.

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Canadian Mennonite and The Mennonite.

Fall 2001

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Ten years after Gulf War, ex-soldier and his wife say thanks for support during battle for CO status

PENINSULA, Ohio—For 10 years, Tim and Yvette Coil have treasured encouraging letters that were their lifeline during the Gulf War. Now the former soldier and his wife want to express their thanks.

While serving with the U.S. Army based in Germany, Tim had come to the conclusion that military service was incompatible with following Jesus. He was sent to the front lines in Iraq, where he faced death threats. Meanwhile, back in Germany, Yvette was ostracized as the conscientious objector's wife.

Cathy and Andre Gingerich Stoner, then serving with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Germany, asked Mennonites and other pacifists to write letters to the Coils during those difficult months.

"[They] saved me from self-destruction," Yvette wrote in a recent email to the Stoners. "They helped me at a very hard time in my life."

Now, as the United States again steps up military action, the Coils are sharing their story.

While stationed in Germany, the Coils began attending church and studying the Bible. As the build-up toward war in the Gulf got under way, Tim befriended a soldier applying for conscientious objector (CO) status. At the same time, Tim's sister died and Yvette was pregnant with their first child.

"When my son was born—Dec. 3, 1990—that's what crystallized my beliefs in nonviolence," Tim says. "I realized that God created my son, and God created everyone else's sons. God gives life, so what right do I have to take it?"

Tim's commanding officers were not happy about his realization. "We'll drag you down there, or you'll go to prison," Tim remembers one yelling. Not certain of his options, he went to the Gulf but refused to carry a weapon.

At the same time, the Stoners and their network of peace counselors in Germany were offering information to military personnel seeking to apply for CO status. After phone conversations between Cathy and Yvette, they started following Tim's case.

In Saudi Arabia and eventually in Kuwait and Iraq, where Tim drove a fuel truck on the front lines, he was harassed and taunted by other Americans. One day he overheard two colleagues discussing shooting him and blaming his death on a sniper.

Through MCC and other peace networks, the Stoners spread the word about Tim's situation and called for letters of support to the couple, their congressional representatives and Tim's commanding officer.

Letters first came by the dozens, then by the hundreds. The Coils have kept many of them to show to their children, Joshua, now 10, and Brittany, 9.

When Tim returned to Germany in May 1991 after six months in the Gulf, he finished compiling his CO application. Finally released from the military in May 1992—Tim accepted an honorable discharge on other grounds after his CO application had been held up for a year—the family moved to Ohio, Tim's native state.

The years of trauma had taken their toll. Tim became withdrawn and could not find a church where he felt comfortable. He had health problems, which he attributes to the war, and struggled to control his temper. Then about a year ago, Yvette suggested they see a counselor. In July, she found the Stoners' email address and wrote to thank them.

Andre suggested that the Coils try attending nearby Aurora (Ohio) Mennonite Church. "We immediately felt like we were home," Tim says. "The church has been a real blessing."

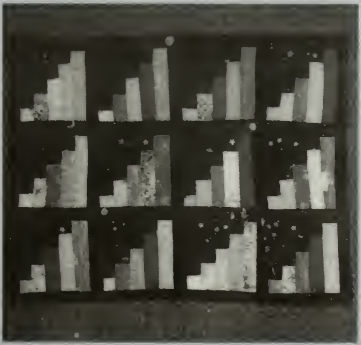
While many of the materials Tim read while applying for CO status were written from an Anabaptist perspective, the Coils had not realized the extent to which nonresistance is central to Mennonite faith. They are now looking forward to sharing their experiences with others.

The need for what they have to say has been especially clear since Sept. 11, Tim says.

"The recent violence has solidified my beliefs even further," he says. "Violence begets violence. … For Christians, the values of our country shouldn't come before the values of God.

"I want people to know that not one little bit of support, not one letter went unnoticed. Their help continues to affect me and my family. They were a blessing, and I'm grateful."—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

> I want people to know that not one little bit of support, not one letter went unnoticed.
>
> *—Tim Coil*



MCC photo by Nancy Troyer

Caring quilt

Weeks before the tragedy of Sept. 11, Frances Stauffer of Goshen, Ind., pieced this quilt she called "New York City at Night." Auctioned at the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale in Elkhart on Sept. 22, the quilt raised more than $12,000 for Mennonite Central Committee. The quilt will be sent to New York mayor Rudy Giuliani.

From cookies to car washes, Colorado congregation shows monthlong appreciation to pastor, family

AURORA, Colo.—Forgive Roy Walls and his family if they have put on a little weight in the past month. During October, they were flooded with invitations to eat out, meals brought in and deliveries of homemade ice cream and cookies—all courtesy of the Walls' congregation, Peace Mennonite Community Church in Aurora.

"I step on the scale and just groan," says Walls, the congregation's pastor.

October was Clergy Appreciation Month. So Peace showed Walls and his family how much they appreciate them by doing something for them every day of the month. In fact, so many people signed up to do things for the Walls that the congregation had to extend Clergy Appreciation Month into November.

Food has not been the only gift. One member changed the oil in the family's vehicles, while another washed them. Another gave the Walls' furnace a winter check-up. Another helped Walls with a list of "honey-do" projects around the house. Yet another helped the three Walls children with their household chores.

The family has received flowers, gift certificates for video rentals and tickets to a Colorado Avalanche professional hockey game in Denver.

"It has been incredible," says Walls, a pastor for 18 years, including the past two years at Peace. "I have never experienced anything like this before."

"I'm usually not at a loss for words, but with this, I'm speechless. … It's just incredible."

The origin of the congregation's observance of Clergy Appreciation Month started with Tracy Smith, one of the congregation's elders, who heard of the idea on a radio program in August. At a congregational retreat over Labor Day weekend, Smith started surreptitiously soliciting volunteers to do something for the Walls family each day of October.

"It's very hard to keep something from [Roy], so that was part of the fun," Smith says.

At the Sept. 30 worship service, Smith announced the congregation's plans for Clergy Appreciation Month. "[The Walls] were really befuddled," Smith says. "They had no idea what was going on."

He says the congregation wanted to honor not just Walls but also his wife, Rosie, and their children, Mindy, 16, Michael, 14, and Ryan, 13.

"Without the family behind the pastor, there's a big void there," Smith says. "We couldn't say we would recognize our pastor without recognizing our pastor's family."

That wasn't lost on Walls. "We feel like family," he says. "I'm the pastor, but … they are looking out for my wife and my children.

"My hope and wish would be that other pastors and other congregations could experience something similar."—*Rich Preheim*

MWC executive calls for solidarity

When Ray Brubacher's flight from Zimbabwe landed in Toronto on Sept. 11, he learned of the terrorist attacks in the United States just hours earlier. That put an ironic twist on the question often posed to him: Is Zimbabwe safe?

Brubacher is a Mennonite World Conference associate executive secretary, responsible for the next MWC assembly, which will be held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in 2003.

Despite the country's economic and political turmoil, Brubacher believes Zimbabwe is a good place for the 2003 gathering and that the world Mennonite and Brethren in Christ family needs to stand in solidarity with sisters and brothers who face uncertainty.

Brubacher said that Zimbabwe's tourism industry is suffering, and so hotels are more willing to negotiate prices. He also downplayed concerns about AIDS, saying that Zimbabwe was the third country to institute blood screening for HIV and that Bulawayo has an excellent private hospital.—*MWC News Service*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Missionary recognition

Tanzanian church leaders Ephraim Mafuru (center) and Amos Muhagachi present longtime mission worker Elva Landis with a certificate from the Tanzania Mennonite Church honoring her 47 years of service in that country with Eastern Mennonite Missions. Landis, 85, now lives at Landis Homes, Lititz, Pa., where Mafuru and Muhagachi delivered the tribute to Landis on Oct. 10.

Not a church plant but still God's work

New York Bible study group has Mennonite leadership

EDEN, N.Y.—For the past four years, about 20 people have been meeting at least twice a month for Bible study under the guidance of a Mennonite pastor. They live in Eden, a town 30 miles south of the nearest Mennonite congregation, Westside Mennonite Church in Buffalo, N.Y.

While some might want to call the group a church plant, it really is not, says Westside pastor Neftali Torres, who has provided leadership for the last two years. It is an autonomous group, a large interdenominational community Bible study.

In July, Westside commissioned one of the Bible-study couples, Jay and Rosalie Brumbaugh, for the work at Eden. Their commissioning was also supported by New York Conference and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

"The nature of this commissioning gives witness to God's activity among Mennonites in western New York," says John Powell, director of evangelism and church development for MBM. "Westside Mennonite sees this as another step in God's call to be missional. God has called the Brumbaughs for such a time as this. There is a deep commitment on the part of MBM and the New York Mennonite Conference to this ministry."

That continued support and partnership is needed at Eden, says Torres, an MBM urban ministry director. "The group is not ready to be a church, and we need to respect that," he says. "But they want our support and oversight. They are a strong fellowship with strong leadership and much interest in looking deeper into the Word and walking closer with God."

The group studied Matthew for more than three years, which provides plenty of material for learning how to be God's people in community and dealing with peace issues, Torres says. Most recently, the group has taken a closer look at the Anabaptist stand on peace and what it means to be a Christian in a time of war. It is a new concept for the members of the Bible study, since several are military veterans and no one comes from Anabaptist or Mennonite traditions.

Even the Brumbaughs do not have Anabaptist roots, although they actively sought Anabaptist leadership for a community Bible study they envisioned.

"I have always believed every town should have a Bible study or care group," Rosalie Brumbaugh says. "Not necessarily people from the same denomination, just a group of believers."

For now, that's exactly what they are, people from different churches and walks of life who study the Bible and care for one another. A few members have left while others have joined. But for the most part, the core group has stayed the same and formed some deep relationships. Today, it is a group of couples, ages 37 to 87 along with three widows.

Torres and the Brumbaughs differ on how they view their own roles in the group. Torres envisions a change to less direct leadership and more oversight, while the Brumbaughs would like to continue with support and guidance from a pastor. But for now, it is a Bible study with an Anabaptist twist, Torres says, and this is God's work, even if the group never feels the call to become a church.

"Sometimes, that's all we are called to do," Torres says, "to serve the needs of people."
—Siegrid Richer for MBM news

> **I have always believed every town should have a Bible study or care group. Not necessarily people from the same denomination, just a group of believers.**
>
> *—Rosalie Brumbaugh*

Canadian Mennonite University enrollment up nearly 30 percent

WINNIPEG—In its second year of operation, Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg reports 327 full-time students, an increase of nearly 30 percent from last year. In addition, 53 part-time students were registered.

CMU was created by the merger of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College, all Mennonite-affiliated schools in Winnipeg.

The college has added 20 more courses for the 2001-2002 academic year, including drama, a new music education concentration and two nursing courses. CMU's international development courses and athletic offerings were also expanded.

Semilla

Service Opportunity in Guatemala

Semilla, The Latin American Anabaptist Seminary , is seeking to fill two positions

Seminary Rector
The seminary rector should be bilingual Latin American, with educational background in theology and/or education (PhD. preferred), and knowledge and understanding of Anabaptist institutions in the region.

Director of CASAS
(Central American Study and Service), the intercultural program of Semilla.
This innovative transcultural educational program needs a director (masters degree in an area such as education, Spanish or political science preferred) who is bilingual, committed to peace and justice and nonviolence, preferably a participant in a Mennonite church.

Send resumes to rectoria@amigo.net.gt

Chinese Mennonite pioneer dies at 96

Stephen Wang in 1981

CHANGCHUN, China—Stephen Wang, one of the first two American-trained Chinese in the Chinese Mennonite church, died Oct. 25 at the age of 96 in Changchun.

The son of one of the first Chinese Mennonite converts, Wang and James Liu studied at Bluffton (Ohio) College and Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., from 1930 to 1932. They both graduated from Bethel.

Wang received his elementary education at a Mennonite mission school where he got to know General Conference Mennonite Church missionary E.G. Kaufman, who later became a Bluffton dean and Bethel president. He arranged for Wang and Liu to attend those two schools.

After graduation and returning home, Wang was a church youth worker and taught in a Mennonite high school before the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 forced him and his family to flee south. He became a university science professor during World War II, teaching at several schools through the 1970s. In 1969, Wang and his family were sent to work in the countryside for four years.

Communication with Wang broke off during World War II, and it was thought that he had died. But in 1980, he renewed contact with Liu. Wang returned to the United States in 1982 for the 50th anniversary of his Bethel graduation.

Correction: The name of Ohio Conference delegate Lorene Amstutz was misspelled in the Oct. 23 issue.

Vada Snider

The art of mathematics

Artist and 1998 Bethel College graduate David Alan Kaufman (left) and Richard Rempel, mathematics professor at the North Newton, Kan., school, stand behind a Kaufman-created sculpture of a mathematical theorem. Called the Douglas Pentagon Theorem, it says that given any five points in space, a certain process always produces two pentagons in different places, one of them a star. The sculpture, commissioned by Bethel's mathematics department, was unveiled Oct. 13 on campus.

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MCC forgiveness seminar draws 40 students

NEW YORK—Planning for the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) United Nations office's student seminar on "Breaking Cycles of Retaliation: Forgiveness as a Political Act?" took a turn after the events of Sept. 11. Held Oct. 4-6 in Manhattan, the theme had been decided months earlier.

"Where we had previously been considering forgiveness in geographically remote settings such as South Africa [and] Palestine/Israel, the attacks on civilians 2.5 miles from our office made such issues as retaliation and forgiveness unexpectedly concrete," wrote office intern Kristen Mathies in a report on the seminar.

About 40 college and university students attended the seminar, which also provided an introduction to the work of nongovernmental organizations at the United Nations. Presenters included William O'Neill, senior researcher at the International Peace Academy in New York; Bonganjalo Goba, a South African who is visiting professor of theology and ethics at Lancaster (Pa.) Theological Seminary; Bridget Rutt, MCC worker in Rwanda and Burundi; Alain Epp-Weaver, MCC worker in Palestine; and Felicity Hill of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.—*MCC News Service*

COM workers to gather for Nov. 9-11 reunion

NEWTON, Kan.—As the work of the Commission on Overseas Mission prepares to be folded into the new Mennonite Mission Network, COM will hold a Nov. 9-11 reunion of all former and current COM workers, board members, staff and their families. It will be held at the Mabee Center near Hesston, Kan.

Activities will include sharing stories, reminiscing, games and discussion groups. A Saturday-night worship service will be open to the public.

"This will be a time to reflect and thank God for the work of COM, to renew old friendships and to form new friendships, to celebrate our past while looking toward the future, to share stories, to sing together, to relax and have fun together," says COM executive assistant Karen McCabe-Juhnke.—*GCMC News Service*

MBM worker to direct Irish reconciliation studies

DUBLIN, Ireland—Joe Liechty, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Ireland since 1980, has been named coordinator of the Reconciliation Studies program at Trinity College's Irish School of Ecumenics. Although the college is in Dublin, the master's degree program will be based in Belfast, Northern Ireland.—*MBM News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Nov. 6, 1963—Virginia Conference stipulates that faculty members at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, Va., no longer have to wear regulation dress.

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Events

Eastern Mennonite Seminary's annual School for Leadership Training, Jan. 21-24, 2002, on ministry in a postmodern matrix. For information, contact EMS at 540-432-4597; email <semdev@emu.edu>.
Sixth Cincinnati Mennonite Arts Weekend, Feb. 1-3, 2002. The theme is "Building Bridges: Artists and the Congregation." For information, contact Hal Hess or Christine Schumacher, 513-351-8785 or email <schess@cinci.infi.net>.
Mennonite Disaster Service all-unit meeting, Feb. 8-9, 2002, Phoenix. Registration deadline is Dec. 1. For information, contact the MDS office at 1018 Main St., Akron, Pa. 17501.

Workers

Gibbs, Elizabeth, was licensed Aug. 1 as minister of worship and youth at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.
Gibbs, Stephen, was installed Aug. 1 as lead pastor of Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.
Good, Roy, was installed Sept. 1 as assistant pastor at Gospel Hill Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.
Kehr, Anita Yoder, was ordained Aug. 19 at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, Ind.
King, Douglas, was ordained Sept. 9 as associate pastor at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.
Loop, Barry, was installed Sept. 9 as lead pastor at First Mennonite Church, Richmond, Va.
Miller, Ed, concluded a pastorate Aug. 31 at Woodland Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.
Musser, James, was installed Sept. 9 as pastor of Stephens City Mennonite Church, Middletown, Va.
Roth, James, was installed Aug. 12 as pastor of Hickory (N.C.) Mennonite Church.
Shull, Randall, concluded a pastorate Aug. 31 at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.
Yoder, Lonnie and Teresa, have begun a one-year Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions assignment in St. Elizabeth, Jamaica, working with leadership training and marriage and family relationships.

Births

Alderfer, Elizabeth Louise, Oct. 5, to Dayle and Mary Schmidt Alderfer, Newton, Kan.
Beshara, Jacob Tarek, Sept. 13, to Tarek and Stacy Neff Beshara, Mishawaka, Ind.
Clemens Smucker, Sophia Ruth, Oct. 5, to Judy and Steve Clemens Smucker, Telford, Pa.
Dunkle, Owen Mead, Sept. 1, to Ken and Sharon Dunkle, Zionsville, Pa.
Kemper, Genevieve Noel, Oct. 11, to Jens and Virginia George Alkemper, Evanston, Ill.
King, David Lawrence, Sept. 18, to Bradley and Stacy Curtis King, Valparaiso, Ind.
King, Thalia Bella, Oct. 10, to Dale and Marcela Shank King, Pittsburgh.
Konopinski, Alex Robert, Oct. 1, to Rob and Andrea Liestman Konopinski, South Bend, Ind.
Miller, Mariah Kay, Oct. 10, to Joel and Angela Mast Miller, Goshen, Ind.
Sharpe, Blake Everett, Oct. 15, to Mark and Stephanie Friesen Sharpe, Tampa, Fla.
Snyder, Emogen Ann, Sept. 22, to Toby and Amanda Seachris Snyder, McPherson, Kan.
Voth, Rienne Faith, Sept. 5, to Michael and Jennifer Probst Voth, Buhler, Kan.
Wagner, Elijah Nathaniel, Sept. 24, to Lew and Jean Briskey Wagner, Harrisonburg, Va.
Weber, Brett Robert, Oct. 7, to Robert and Cheryl Baker Weber, Conestogo, Ont.
Wells, Mia Taylor, Sept. 20, to Tim and Keren Flores Wells, Glendale, Ariz.

Marriages

Beeler/Clemmer: Heather Beeler, Elmira, Ont., and Ray Clemmer, Elmira, Oct. 13 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.
Carson/Lacher: Katharine Carson, Florida, and Mark Lacher, Souderton, Pa., Oct. 13 at Hallam, Pa.
Christner/O'Conner: Joe Christner, Iowa City, Iowa, and Mildred Kauffman O'Conner, Kalona, Iowa, Sept. 24 at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City.
Dehoff/Nolt: Patricia Lynn Dehoff, Ephrata, Pa., and Ryan Van Nolt, Stevens, Pa., Oct. 20 at Lancaster, Pa.
Ensminger/Miller: Ryan Ensminger, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, and Danielle Miller, Mount Pleasant, Oct. 13 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.
Hiller/Myers: Angela Hiller, Elizabethtown, Pa., and Brian Myers, Landisville, Pa., Aug. 25 at Landisville Mennonite Church.
King/Ries: Andre King, Napoleon, Mich., and Sarah Ries, Freeman, S.D., Oct. 6 at Pilgrim Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.
Kinsinger/Nickell: Candra Kinsinger, Parnell, Iowa, and James Nickell, Wellman, Iowa, Oct. 6 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.
McConnell/Shirk: Chris McConnell, Orrville, Ohio, and Kendra Shirk, Orrville, Oct. 13 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Sommers/Yoder: Dickson Sommers, Sturgis, Mich., and Jennifer Yoder, Henderson, Neb., Oct. 6 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

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a new magazine for a new church

It's almost here.

The Mennonite will premier its new look with our Jan. 8, 2002, issue. Some features of the new format include:

- Twice-per-month frequency with 32 pages in every issue
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Deaths

Bechler, Albert, 59, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 9. Spouse: Sarah Byler Bechler. Parents: Albert and Ida Litwiller Bechler (deceased). Other survivors: son David; one grandson. Funeral: Oct. 13 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Bechler, Alvin, 92, Fort Wayne, Ind., died June 4. Spouse: Elfie Bechler. Parents: Christian and Mary Bechler (deceased). Other survivors: son Kenneth; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 8 at Fort Wayne.

Bontrager, Karen, 57, Middlebury, Ind., died Oct. 15 of cancer. Spouse: Ervin Bontrager. Other survivors: children Wendell, Charlene Pierce, Crystal Kauffman; six grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Bowman, Solomon, 91, St. Jacobs, Ont., died Oct. 4. Spouse: Grace Shantz Bowman. Parents: Martin and Magdelina Bowman (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Ruth Ann Sauder; one grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Detwiler, Paul Nice, 92, New Britain, Pa., died Oct. 8. Spouse: (1st) Barbara Thut Detwiler (deceased); (2nd) Shirley Ann Strouse Welsh Detwiler. Other survivors: son Terry; stepchildren Wanda Buckley, Eileen Riley; two grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 13 at Deep Run West Mennonite Church, Perkasie, Pa.

Glick, J. Scott, 40, Tupelo, Miss., died Oct. 16. Parents: John and Mary Byers Glick. Other survivors: children Jordan, Jeremy. Burial: Oct. 22 at Lancaster, Pa.

Good, Janet Gingerich, 64, Kouts, Ind., died Sept. 26. Spouse: Roland Good. Parents: Joe (deceased) and Ada Gingerich. Funeral: Sept. 29 at Kouts.

Horst, Nathaniel, 84, Cambridge, Ont., died Oct. 8. Spouse: (1st) Elvina Bowman Horst (deceased); (2nd) Helen Wideman Horst. Parents: Annie and Daniel Horst (deceased). Other survivors: children Bruce, Joyce Sukkau, Marjorie Weber, Frieda Wideman, Joyce McKee; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 11 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, Abram H., 93, Lancaster, Pa., died Oct. 7 of cancer. Spouse: Esther Metzler Martin (deceased). Parents: John and Cora Huber Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Lois, Ruth, John; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 10 at Landis Valley Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Miller, Lydia Mae Schmucker, 79, Morocco, Ind., died Aug. 2 of cancer. Spouse: Marvin Miller. Parents: Jacob and Amanda Wierich Schmucker (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Marilyn Jo Myers; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind.

Moyer, Nelson D., 87, Lansdale, Pa., died Oct. 8. Spouse: Evelyn Derstine Moyer. Parents: Jacob and Ida Detweiler Moyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Weaver, John, Robert; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Mueller, Amelia Katherine Mueller, 90, North Newton, Kan., died Oct. 14. Spouse: Adam Mueller. Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Ellenberger Mueller (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Ted, Lyman; numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kan.

Stauffer, Eugene, 71, Akron, Pa., died Sept. 9. Spouse: Goldie Raihl Stauffer. Parents: Elmer and Susan Groff Stauffer (deceased). Other survivors: children Jeffrey, Gregory; one grandchild; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 12 at Landis Valley Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Ulrich, Milo "Mike" Vernon, 86, Rensselaer, Ind., died Sept. 25 of kidney and heart disease. Spouse: Mary Louise Miller Ulrich. Parents: Andy and Ella Unzicker Ulrich (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 27 at Burr Oak Mennonite Church, Rensselaer, Ind.

Unruh, Marie Enns, 98, Inman, Kan., died Oct. 12. Spouse: David G. Unruh (deceased). Parents: Jacob J. and Sarah Balzer Enns (deceased). Survivors: children Roy, Virgil; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Memorial service: Oct. 15 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Correction: In the obituary for Ella Jantzen Penner (Oct. 23 issue), spouse Henry W. Penner is deceased.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event. Email your announcements to themennonite@mph.org or log on at our Web site: www.themennonite.org.

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- **Caretaker position** at ***Drift Creek Camp*** in Siuslaw National Forest near Oregon coast. Hosting, maintenance, cleaning. Call Ron Sears, 541-996-3978; email <driftcreek@harborside.com>.

- **Fairview Mennonite Church**, Fairview, Mich., is seeking full-time ***lead pastor*** for a small-town church. Attendance 250-300 with opportunities for growth and outreach.

  Contact Reuel Detweiler, <rdetweiler@m33access.com>, 989-848-2305.

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  For further information, contact Faith and Life Communications, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1; <flc@confmenn.mb.ca>; 204-885-2565 ext. 260; fax 204-832-7804.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Kitchener, Ont., is an intergenerational, vibrant, culturally diverse (Anglo and Hispanic), urban congregation of 400 members and is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** with a focus on preaching and worship, pastoral care, teaching and administration. The pastor will provide leadership working within the team model of ministry as a co-pastor and colleague. Starting date negotiable.

  Please respond by Jan. 15, 2002, to Muriel Bechtel, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

- **Sarasota Christian School**, Sarasota, Fla., has a job opening for an ***athletic director***.

  Interested people should email Barbara Miller at <bmiller@sarasotachristian.org> or call 941-371-6481.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for a full-time ***4th-grade teaching position*** beginning in January 2002. Lake Center is a K-8 school of 400 students in Hartville, Ohio (Akron/Canton area).

  For an application or further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2049, or <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>; Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **Mennonite Home of Albany, Ore.**, seeks a ***foundation director*** to provide leadership for a major capital fund drive, planned giving programs and special fund-raising projects. Experience in development and fund raising are preferable.

  Please send a resume to Ron Litwiller, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; email <ron@mennonitehome.com>; Web site <Mennonitehome.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has full-time ***science*** position for 2002-2003. Includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined. Active Christian commitment, membership in the Mennonite Church preferred, open integration of Christian Scripture and faith into teaching and personal life, dedication to effective teaching and love for young people are desirable.

  People interested in learning more about this position or in applying should call J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 540-432-4502; or write to 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

Mennonite Church USA

Executive Board

The Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA is seeking candidates for the following positions (location negotiable but eventually located in one of four offices in Newton, Kan., or Elkhart, Ind., or new East and West Coast offices):

- ***Assistant director, Witness and Peace Ministry, Office of Congregational Life*** (half- to full-time). This staff person oversees lay leadership development for congregational mission, including ministries of witness, service, peace and justice, and stewardship and networks with churchwide and area conference mission, peace, environment and stewardship groups.
- ***Assistant director, Community Life Ministry, Office of Congregational Life*** (half- to full-time). This staff person oversees lay leadership development for governance, care and healing, spiritual discernment and guidance, and conflict resolution and networks with churchwide and area conference groups related to pastoral leadership, care and healing, spiritual direction and mediation.
- ***Peace advocate, Office of the Executive Director*** (up to half-time). This staff person leads and organizes peace and justice advocacy work on behalf of the denomination and works with inter-Mennonite and ecumenical peace and justice groups.

Applicants please send letter of interest and resume to Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, <rbyler@MennoniteUSA.org>, or 219-294-7131, by Nov. 15.

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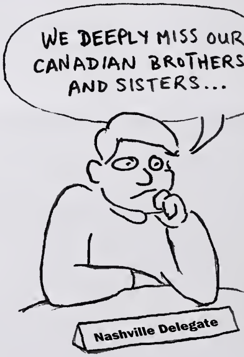
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by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

The Nonviolent Atonement by J. Denny Weaver (Eerdmans, 2001, $22) explores the history of the Christian doctrine of atonement, exposes the intrinsically violent dimensions of the traditional atonement view and offers a new, thoroughly nonviolent paradigm for understanding this central Christian belief.

The Body and the Book: Writing from a Mennonite Life by Julia Kasdorf (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001, $26) consists of 10 essays that explore this poet's life as part of mainstream American society and as a Mennonite woman. She writes, "I seek to honor my distinctive Mennonite heritage even as I transgress and transcend its limits."

As You Grieve: Consoling Words from Around the World by Aaron Zerah (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $12.95) brings together consoling words written and spoken over the centuries in traditions as diverse as those of Native Americans, Africans, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews and Christians.

For Bitter or for Better: Keys for a Great Marriage by John M. Drescher (Gateway Films, 2001, $69.99) offers advice for a healthy marriage. The curriculum kit includes eight 25-minute video programs, a leader's guide and Drescher's book *For the Love of Marriage*. Order from Gateway Films, P.O. Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490-0540, 800-523-0226.

Building Together: Developing Your Blueprint for Congregational Youth Ministry by Carol Duerksen (Faith & Life Resources, Herald Press, 2001, $12.95) offers inspiring and creative approaches to youth ministry that take seriously the needs of youth, the congregation and the changing culture. It promotes involving youth in the whole life of the congregation.

Raising Godly Kids: 52 Guidelines for Counter-Culture Parenting by Harold J. Sala (Christian Publications, Inc., 2001, $10.99) combines biblical principles, practical applications and humor to help parents frustrated with a culture that questions integrity.

Finding God in the Lord of the Rings by Kurt Bruner and Jim Ware (Tyndale, 2001, $12.99) reveals connections to faith and supernatural themes throughout the classic trilogy. The authors contend that Tolkien's tale shows all people are on an epic quest.

Speak What We Feel (Not What We Ought to Say) by Frederick Buechner (HarperSanFrancisco, 2001, $22) invites readers to discover the literature that speaks to him most powerfully, shaping his life and Christian vision. He probes works by Gerard Manley Hopkins, Mark Twain, G.K. Chesterton and William Shakespeare.

Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims by Howard Zehr (Good Books, 2001, $18.95) includes portraits and interviews with 39 victims of violent crime and offers their first-person narratives.

Bread for the Enemy: A Peace and Justice Lectionary, compiled, edited and introduced by Dorothy Jean Weaver (64 pages, $4), is available from Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, P.O. Box 173, Orrville, OH 44667, <mcpjc@sssnet.com>. Also available are posters, bookmarks, T-shirts and Spanish-language resources promoting peace and justice.

A Book of Hours by John Reeves (Eerdmans, 2001, $20) contains a cycle of meditative poems about the life of Christ. Based on the liturgical calendar of the church, these poems reflect on the story of Christ's time on earth, from the Annunciation to the Ascension. Biblical quotations and artwork accompany the poems.

Recommended reading

The Missing Peace: The Search for Nonviolent Alternatives in United States History by James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter (Pandora Press Canada and Herald Press, 2001, $26.50) is an important book that needs to be part of students' education. That this is the fourth time *The Mennonite* has mentioned it should say how much we recommend it. How we understand our history affects how we view ourselves and how we approach problems. This book shows that how we view history has been distorted by a bias toward redemptive violence. Reading this can help us learn a different way.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

Learning from those who know suffering

Most news stories since Sept. 11 have focused on the way the events of that day punctured the sense of security that our country enjoyed for many years. But behind such reports is another story that is seldom told: People of color in this country did not enjoy that same sense of security before and occasionally remind us that they cannot lose something if they never had it.

Elaine Bryant, pastor of Englewood Mennonite Church in Chicago, was very direct about this matter in our Sept. 25 issue ("Finding the words," page 15).

Bryant compared the Sept. 11 strikes on the halls of financial and political power to the treatment of many in her African-American congregation and other people of color.

"Anglo-European Christians are experiencing for the first time in a generation a sense of insecurity that African-Americans and other so-called minorities have experienced all the time in this nation," she said.

These are hard things to hear for those of us who are white. At a time when we are angry about the loss of stability and tranquility that we enjoyed, we do not really want anyone telling us that what we are experiencing is what others continue to experience at our hands. But if we can hear the message, then we will also be blessed by these communities that have endured generations of suffering and instability.

A place to begin is with those among us who most understand a world with little security.

There are many things we can learn from the African-American community, especially, these days. Debates about how our country should respond to terrorism are playing out behind the scenes in communities of color but from the perspective of a people who continue to be oppressed by this country.

One such debate among national African-American leaders has become quite public. It relates to a Saudi prince who wanted to provide a huge gift of cash to New York City.

Several days after the attack on the World Trade Center towers, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal attempted to give a relief check of $10 million to New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani. Giuliani refused to accept it because of the prince's view that while America has the right to defend itself, our country must also understand the motives and roots of terrorism.

Shortly after Giuliani rebuffed the prince, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, an African-American congresswoman from Georgia, wrote to Alwaleed and asked him to give the money to "help improve the state of black America and build better lives."

Syndicated columnist William Raspberry was not happy with her request.

"We don't need our own people groveling before foreigners, pimping our plight, even for ostensibly worthy causes," he wrote in an Oct. 21 column.

National African-American leaders are struggling to make sense of the current war on terrorism just like everyone else. But while wanting to remain loyal to their country, they also understand the anger of those responsible for hijacking the four airliners. So we do well to learn how to live with our loss of security from those who understand both sides best.

For Mennonites, the place to begin is by listening first to African-American, Native American and Hispanic leaders in our church. In doing so, we may be called to change the way we understand ourselves as both citizens of this country and as adherents of a tradition that advocates for Christian peace and justice.

Virtually all the articles, letters and poetry we have published in response to the Sept. 11 attacks have come from white leaders and congregational members in our church. It is understandable that this would be the case because we white folks have the most to lose and are struggling to reconcile our nonresistant faith with the harsh realities of this new world in which we now live.

However, as peace and justice committees, leaders and academicians begin to create resources for dealing with these issues, a place to begin is with those among us who most understand a world with little security. Their experience is longer than eight weeks.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

November 13, 2001

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Death of a saint

Carlton Minnis died on Sept. 26, and his memorial service was celebrated on Oct. 6. I want to pay tribute to this fine man. I first came to know Carlton about 25 years ago, when I became pastor at Kempton (Pa.) Mennonite Fellowship and he was pastor at Second Mennonite Church, Philadelphia. We saw each other infrequently after I moved in 1984 to Michigan, then to Idaho. But he was the sort of friend whose long absence seems but a moment when we were reunited.

Three things stand out when I think of Carlton. The first thing was his gentlemanly character. He was always courteous and never seemed to be bitter, even though, as a man of color, he could recount some humiliating experiences.

Next, I believe he had a love for the Word of the Lord and for the Lord of the Word that was fervent and unwavering. His pre-Easter sermon series here in Aberdeen, Idaho, was clear, concise, biblical and aglow with earnestness.

Third, he made the best use of his gifts and training. He put the years of schooling at Philadelphia College of the Bible to good use. He had a very good head, but he also had a good heart, and neither eclipsed the other.

My dear friend Steve Strunk of Church of the Good Samaritan, Holland, Pa., put it like this: “We will miss Carlton Minnis. He had a sense of God’s peace and wisdom that was unusual. That sly sense of humor, his soft-spoken but firm stand on issues.”

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

After the attacks

The articles in the Oct. 23 issue commenting on the Sept. 11 attacks and our nation’s response were a welcome alternative to what I read in the daily newspaper. We constantly hear the militaristic perspectives of our president and other governmental leaders. These do not ring true to my ears.

The current situation will be a real test of the Mennonite church’s commitment to Christ’s way of peace. The Oct. 23 issue, and hopefully many more to come, will help to keep us on the right track.—*Abraham K. Gehman, Bally, Pa.*

Perry Bush writes in his “Lessons of History” (Oct. 23) that World War II had very little to do with saving the lives of the world’s Jews. My guess is that he might get an entirely different response if he asked the survivors of the Holocaust and their families.

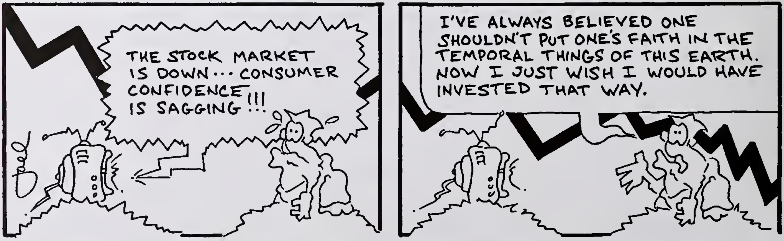
Bush also makes no mention of our country’s postwar Marshall Plan, which helped rebuild France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and other European countries. The minister of the interior of Germany recently paid tribute to our country for helping Germany recover from the war. I was not there in World War II (I was in the South Pacific), but I have many military friends who soldiered there, and I believe they would agree with me. —*Ronald V. Woelk, Hutchinson, Kan.*

These are the courageous words of Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., the only senator to vote against the USA Patriot Act, which was signed into law Oct. 26 and gives the federal government unlimited powers in finding “terrorists”:

“There is no doubt that if we lived in a police state, it would be easier to catch terrorists. ... If we lived in a country where the police were allowed to search your home at any time for any reason; if we lived in a country where the government is entitled to open your mail, eavesdrop on your phone conversations or intercept your email communications; if we lived in a country where people could be

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Pontius’ Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**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I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED ONE SHOULDN'T PUT ONE'S FAITH IN THE TEMPORAL THINGS OF THIS EARTH. NOW I JUST WISH I WOULD HAVE INVESTED THAT WAY.
Joel

theMennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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by American Bible Society

y readers say

held in jail indefinitely based on what they write or think or based on mere suspicion that they are up to no good, the government would probably discover and arrest more terrorists or would-be terrorists, just as it would find more lawbreakers generally. But that wouldn't be a country in which we would want to live, and it wouldn't be a country for which we could, in good conscience, ask our young people to fight and die. In short, that country wouldn't be America."

While we desperately need increased airport and other such security measures, the myth of redemptive violence is clear in the continual expansion of the American police state. Redemptive violence assumes that freedom and order come through violence and repression of political dissent. Ever more does our allegiance to Christ call us to choose between the American who passively supports the repression of voices of love (justice, reconciliation, peace, etc.) and the American who is that voice being repressed.—*Dan Krehbiel, North Newton, Kan.*

Kinfolk

Thank you, Eloise Hiebert Meneses, for your frank (and funny) article, "The Virtues and Vices of 'Mennonite' Culture" (Oct. 30). Lest all you ethnic types now think that we newcomers must be coddled and placated, be assured that we learn to adjust, and we hope you'll learn to adjust to us, too. My husband and I have even figured out a way to play the Mennonite game: In our church full of Yoders and Millers and Swartzendrubers, we just say, "Hey, our name ends in 'er,' so that makes us part of the family!" Seriously, our common love for Jesus is what makes us all related—and what helps us relate.—*Amy Spencer, Kalona, Iowa*

Nov. 18 is Bible Sunday

The Bible
and the painting that came to life

The Bible is not a rule book but a window through which to see God.

by Eddy Hall

I love the Bible. It amazes me how some preachers (not all, by any means) can take the most exciting book in the world and make it boring, how some Sunday school teachers (just some, mind you) can present Scripture in such a way that you wonder if class will ever end. Making the Bible boring ought to be a crime.

Not that I've always felt this way. When I was in junior high, I accepted my pastor's challenge to read the Bible through in a year by reading three chapters on weekdays and five on Sundays. Two years in a row I did this. I was a fast reader, so I zipped through my three chapters of King James English in, oh, about 15 minutes a day. Not that I got much out of it. But (and this was the point, I thought) I had been a "good Christian" by doing my Bible reading.

Perhaps there is the clue. If I approach Bible reading as my "Christian duty," as something I do because that's what good Christians are supposed to do, I suspect I miss the point. Because I'm looking at it the wrong way, I fail to see what there is to see, and so it's boring.

The Bible does not exist to be the focus of our devotion. God has given us the Bible as a window through which to reveal himself to us.

A handbook for living: When I was in college, I set out on an ambitious Bible study project. I set up a notebook that I alphabetized by topic. As I went through the Bible, whenever I came across something that I could apply, I recorded that Scripture under the relevant topic. My goal was to do this with the whole Bible. When I was done, I would have collected all the Bible had to say about each topic. So, if I wanted to know what the Bible said about lawsuits, for example, I could turn to the L's in my notebook, read those Scriptures and by following those guidelines be confident that I was responding to a lawsuit in the way good Christians were supposed to. At least that was my theory.

Somewhere along the way, my project lost steam and I never finished it. Today I know that even if I had finished it, that notebook would more than likely be collecting dust somewhere. Because, even though a topical listing of Scriptures might be useful for some purposes, I now realize that as a handbook for daily life, that kind of notebook almost completely misses the point. That's partly because I've learned that the Scriptures, to be rightly understood, have to be read in context, and my study method uprooted every Scripture passage from its context. But there's an even more fundamental problem with the way I was going about my Bible study, a problem rooted in the fact that I misunderstood the main purpose of Scripture.

Lucy's picture: In recent years, I've come to see the Bible in a much different and much more exciting way than as a handbook for the Christian life. The first chapter of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, one of C. S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia, opens in little Lucy's bedroom. She and her brother Edmund and their cousin Eustace are looking at Lucy's favorite picture, a framed painting of a Narnian ship. As they look at the picture, the water and the ship begin to move, and before long the three children have gone through the picture frame and entered the land of Narnia.

The Bible is a lot like that painting. We tend to spend a lot of time looking at the Bible, studying it, analyzing it, treasuring it, even applying it. But so long as it remains lifeless, we're not really seeing it, because the Bible does not exist primarily to be studied, mastered or even obeyed. The Bible is a window into the spiritual realm. It is a window through which God is revealed to us.

As I sit in my study today, I can look at my window and notice the raindrops, some dust, a cobweb. But so long as I just study my window, the window is not serving its purpose. The window is not there to be the focus of my attention; it is there to let me see what is happening on the other side.

So it is with the Bible. The Bible does not exist to be the focus of our devotion. God has given us the Bible as a window through which to reveal himself to us. Through the Bible, God opens up to us the whole spiritual realm. He invites us to see the world and life, not just through physical eyes but through spiritual eyes, from God's point of view. And then God invites us to step through the picture frame

Priceless book: A Korean Christian reads her Bible.

into that other realm and join him in his kingdom adventure.

These two vastly different ways of coming to Scripture—as a handbook of rules and as a window through which God reveals himself to us—correspond to the two covenants. The new covenant, Paul writes, "is a covenant, not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old way ends in death; in the new way, the Holy Spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:6, NLT). It is all too possible to approach the gospel as a system of written laws. Perhaps laws with the provision of grace for when I fail, but as a system of laws nonetheless. That's exactly what I was doing in my college-days Bible study project. But, as Paul says, that path ends in spiritual death.

Applying the Scripture: This was how the teachers of the religious law and the Pharisees of Jesus' day came to Scripture. These were the Bible scholars, the theologians. They devoted their lives to memorizing and meticulously applying the Scripture —and the rules they had derived from it—to their daily lives and trying to get others to do the same (Matthew 23:15). Sounds pretty spiritual, doesn't it?

Yet it was to these Bible scholars that Jesus said, "Your problem is that you don't know the Scriptures, and you don't know the power of God" (Matthew 22:29 NLT). How could this be? Many of these men could probably quote as much Scripture as Jesus could. They had devoted their lives to Scripture. Yet Jesus said they did not know the Scripture.

Their problem was that they were reading the Scripture the wrong way—primarily as a rule book rather than as a window through which to see God. As a result, they did not truly know the Scripture and did not know God or experience his power in their lives.

This is not to say that the rules do not matter at all. It is to say that they are not the main thing. Jesus affirmed the Pharisees for keeping the rules. Then he scorched them for making the rules, rather than God's purposes, their focus (Matthew 23:23-24).

The Christian life, you see, is not a relationship with a book. It is a relationship with a Person. The book is priceless precisely because it is a window through which we are invited to see, then enter, to get to know the Person. If we reduce the Bible to a rule book, we've missed the point.

Ultimate authority: Christians sometimes refer to the Bible as the ultimate authority in our lives. This is, no doubt, well-intended, but it's simply not biblical. The Bible is authoritative because it is inspired by and reveals the One who is the Ultimate Authority in our lives. If I consider the Bible my ultimate authority, I am at grave risk of relating to the Bible as the Pharisees did—as little more than a rule book. The Bible only becomes God's Word to me when the Spirit gives it life, when it becomes a window on the eternal through which God is revealing himself and his purposes and his perspectives to me.

Can you see the ship moving? Don't settle for a lifeless Bible. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring it alive for you, to open up for you through the Scripture what he wants to show you of himself, his heart, his way of seeing things.

Keep asking until the picture comes to life, until you can see the ship moving, until you can feel the spray of saltwater on your face and taste it on your tongue. When that happens, you will know you are no longer looking at the window; you're looking through the window into the universe on the other side.

Then, if you dare, step through the picture frame into that other world. Then you will truly be getting into the Word.

If I consider the Bible my ultimate authority, I am at grave risk of relating to the Bible as the Pharisees did—as little more than a rule book.

Eddy Hall lives in Goessel, Kan., and is a senior consultant with Living Stones Associates (www.livingstones.com), a church consulting team that works with churches to enhance health and ministry effectiveness through equipping leaders and through integrated planning of ministries, staffing, facilities and finances.

God and the reality of evil

Lessons from a difficult text in a story about David and King Saul

Now the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him.—1 Samuel 16:14

by Leo Hartshorn

Understanding the relationship between the reality of evil and God can be problematic. The story of a tormented Saul and a harp-playing David may help us reflect on that problem.

This difficult text from 1 Samuel is part of the tragedy of King Saul's life. Saul had been rejected by God as king of Israel for his evil deeds. He became more and more suspicious of others and eventually exhibited violent rages. David, a shepherd boy, had already been anointed the new king by the prophet Samuel. The context of this passage tells of Saul's first encounter with David. Saul, who once had God's Spirit upon him, now appears abandoned by God.

Does God cause evil? The text says that "an evil spirit from the Lord tormented [Saul]." This raises questions. Does God send evil spirits to torment people? Does God cause evil? We might conclude from the text that God was ultimately responsible for the "evil" Saul experienced.

As part of an "enlightened" Western culture, we might prefer to say the cause of Saul's illness was paranoid schizophrenia or manic depression. Within the broader story of Israel and its monarchy, however, Saul's oppressive condition was viewed as part of the working out of the divine plan.

Though the idea of evil having its source in God may disturb our sensibilities and theology, it is found in Scripture as testimony to a radical understanding of Jewish monotheism.

If God is one, and there is no other, then even evil must find its ultimate source in God. This explanation avoids the dualism that places evil as an entity or god opposed to the one true God, who is the source of all.

The prophet Amos asked, "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (3:6 KJV), and the prophet Isaiah presents God saying, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me. … I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (45:5,7 KJV).

Even Satan, the adversary, appears as God's instrument for testing Job with evil, suffering and tragedy. Within this theology of the unity of God, the ancient Hebrew had no problem in believing that God sent an evil spirit upon Saul or upon Abimelech (Judges 9:23), or that God could send a lying spirit into the prophets of King Ahab (1 Kings 22:22-23).

A diversity of traditions? A closer look at the canon of Scripture indicates a diverse testimony in the understanding of the relation of evil and God. Certain biblical traditions connect evil directly to God, as we see in the story of Saul. Others distance God from responsibility for the presence of evil.

During one period in the Jewish understanding of evil, the figure of Satan became more prominent. In the book of Job, Satan, the adversary, is God's servant. In what may be a later tradition, Satan became more defined as an opposing entity to God, embodying evil. This tradition probably emerged during the post-exilic period of Israel when Persian dualism influenced Judaism.

When apocalyptic writing flourished within Jewish and Christian thought, there emerged a full-fledged system of evil, with Satan and his demonic forces arrayed in an all-out battle against God and his angels. These diverse perspectives, sometimes in tension with one another, are each given a place within the canon of Scripture and may be indicative of a mystery that cannot be nailed down.

Within these diverse traditions, evidenced in the biblical texts, we see a struggle to understand the powerful presence of evil and its relationship to God in human life and the history of God's people. Even so, from our current Christian understanding, the view of evil as coming from God remains problematic.

Some contemporary thinkers and theologians explain the ultimate source of evil as being a part of the "dark side of God" (e.g. Carl Jung) or as coming from God in some form or manner (e.g. God's allowing or "making space" within the created order for evil and suffering).

We still have trouble comprehending the presence of evil in relationship to God's presence and power. Questions remain: How can the presence and power of evil be reconciled with a perfectly good and all-powerful God? Could not an all-knowing, all-powerful God create a world where a Holocaust and AIDS epidemic could not happen, yet human freedom is maintained? Are the traditional answers for the presence of evil and suffering (i.e., as the work of the devil, the product of human free will, the working out of God's mysterious purposes, God's punishment for humanity's sin or as an oblique means of soul-making) adequate for our faith and understanding? Do we define good and evil in exactly the same way God defines it? Is it necessary that we have the intellectual answers to these questions?

Healing as a practical, therapeutic answer to evil: Intellectual answers do not adequately address the problem of evil. To respond to evil with compassionate ministry is congruent with an Anabaptist perspective. Ethical action for another person's well-being takes precedence over untangling intellectual and theological pretzels.

The response of Saul's servants to his disturbed condition was both practical and therapeutic. We might have called for a psychologist or a spiritual director. Saul's court servants wanted Saul to call for someone who was skillful at playing the lyre, a type of harp. Many ancient societies considered music good for melancholia, a depressed spirit.

Even now, modern therapeutic techniques use music. For David to pluck out a few tunes to soothe the agitated spirit of Saul is not only an ancient but a modern form of therapy.

The young David exhibited a quality of being that those around him could only describe as the presence of God. This was enough for Saul to command David to his side to play the lyre. One wonders whether it was David's melodies or his dynamic, personal and spiritual presence that was therapeutic. As the text says, "Saul would be relieved and feel better, and the evil spirit would depart from him" (1 Samuel 16:23b NRSV).

Today a Saul would more likely need the therapeutic skills of a qualified psychotherapist or a professional counselor than the ritual of exorcism, which is not to deny the spiritual reality of the oppressive nature of evil forces. At times the complexity and deep-seated nature of a psychospiritual problem requires the assistance of a professional.

Surely we can admit that God works to bring healing through the skills of a professional. Even so, there are cases when a person suffering from the effects of evil or tragedy needs someone who is "prudent in speech, and a man of good presence; and [has] the Lord with him" (1 Samuel 16:18b NRSV).

We can perform a simple, therapeutic ministry of presence to others whose spirits are troubled. The root word for therapeutic can be translated "to heal and to restore" or "to serve, care for and wait upon."

The core skills for some types of inner healing are simply an empathetic ear, a compassionate heart, a depth of spirit, a willingness to serve, care for others and take the time to stand alongside that person with a troubled spirit. There are times when the evil in the world, the stress of dealing with tragic and difficult situations or the perplexities of sorting out some meaning in our lives make us need the support of another who can soothe our agitated spirits.

Compassionate ministry: Our response to the presence of evil and troubled spirits can take a practical form through various service and healing ministries. As Christ's therapeutic community, it is our compassionate ministry, like young David's, to serve, care for and bring healing and wholeness, in whatever ways possible and with whatever skills necessary, to people oppressed by forces of evil within the structures of our society and within the tortured and troubled spirits of individual lives.

The best intellectual answers to the problem of evil and its ultimate origin may never fully enlighten that mystery. Our best answer to the problem of evil is compassion.

As Christians who believe in one God, good and powerful, we may not fully understand the presence and power of evil in our world. The best intellectual answers to the problem of evil and its ultimate origin may never fully enlighten that mystery. Our best answer to the problem of evil is compassion.

As followers of a therapeutic Christ, our ministry is to work, with the help and grace of God, at casting out the entrenched powers of evil, soothing the troubled spirits of those around us wounded by wickedness and tragedy, and with compassion to bring some wholeness and healing to those overcome by evil and human suffering.

This article is adapted from an interactive sermon preached by Leo Hartshorn, pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Mission seminar unites leaders from 12 nations as they consider their call to world evangelism

SALUNGA, Pa.—They weren't the 12 tribes of Israel, but for two weeks, mission leaders from 12 countries were hosted by Eastern Mennonite Missions in the United States for the fourth Global Mission Study Seminar (GMSS).

The Sept. 26-Oct. 10 event drew 18 participants from Belize, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, the Philippines and Tanzania as well as from the United States.

The group spoke in Lancaster-area churches and visited local institutions, then divided into four groups for field trips to churches and ministries in New England, Philadelphia, North Carolina and Alabama.

GMSS concluded with a gathering at Black Rock Retreat Center, Quarryville, Pa., where the group swapped stories and observations from their travels. They worshiped and prayed together, pledging to join in new ways for the task of world evangelization.

I was interested to see that in Boston, people are like they are in France, not interested in learning about God and his Word.

—Michel Widmer

"I was interested to see that in Boston, people are like they are in France, not interested in learning about God and his Word, affected by postmodernity," said French Mennonite Michel Widmer, the only European GMSS participant.

Tilahun Beyene from Ethiopia said his visit to public housing communities in Birmingham, Ala., showed him a dimension of life in North America he had never witnessed.

"You have a new frontier right here at home: the disadvantaged and marginalized," he said. "There is an urgent need to reach them with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehamn

Michel Widmer from France (left) and Roberto Cáal from Guatemala break bread together during a Communion service at the fourth Global Mission Study Seminar, hosted by Eastern Mennonite Missions Sept. 26-Oct. 10. Eighteen people from 12 countries attended the seminar.

Shortly after the seminar began, Frits Triman, chair of PIPKA, an Indonesian Mennonite mission board, received word that four Mennonite churches and 104 homes had been burned down in an interreligious conflict on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

"We regret that in some Indonesian communities where Christians are in a majority, they have retaliated by burning mosques," Triman said. "We must not fight violence with violence."

He also reported that in at least one Indonesian community, outside agitators on a rampage were stopped when they found Christian youth guarding a Muslim mosque and Muslim youth guarding a Christian church.

After visiting Hispanic congregations in Washington and North Carolina, Honduran Melvin Fernández said, "This experience has challenged me to avoid isolation and to work together with other God-inspired movements. With the latest world happenings, North American believers will be at a great disadvantage in some countries. Now is the time for brothers and sisters from Asia, Africa and Latin America to pick up the missionary mandate and reach the Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu worlds."

This year's GMSS gathering was the first to be held in the United States. Previous sessions were held in Ethiopia and Indonesia.—*Jewel Showalter of EMM News Service*

EMU wants to offer comfort to Afghan refugees

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The Eastern Mennonite University community is tied up in knots in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. A project organized by students at the Harrisonburg school is aiming to make 100 comforters to send to Mennonite Central Committee to distribute to Afghan refugees.

During the week of Oct. 30-Nov. 2, volunteers sewed together patches in the Campus Center. Ten frames were set up Nov. 2-3 for a "blanket blitz," which produced about 40 completed comforters. Alumni Roger and Rachel Bucher Kauffman of Bellefontaine, Ohio, donated the material for the comforter tops.

The project comes on the heels of four campus teach-ins on the Sept. 11 attacks and weekly peace vigils in downtown Harrisonburg.

The MEDA Store

October 2001 … that all people may experience Christ's love and utilize their abilities to earn a livelihood, provide for families and enrich their communities

Investing in the future

During times of uncertainty, how can we show we have hope? One way is by investing in the future—by giving a gift that will keep on giving for years to come.

An example can be found in the book of Jeremiah, where we read that Babylon has invaded Israel. Jerusalem is under siege, and the area surrounding the city is devastated by war. Jeremiah's hometown, Anathoth, has been destroyed by the fighting. In this desperate and uncertain time, what does God tell Jeremiah to do? Buy a piece of property—in Anathoth! This seems like very bad advice; why throw money away on such a bad investment? But Jeremiah's purchase is a declaration of hope: There will be a brighter future! Says the Lord: "Someday people will again own property here in this country and will be buying and selling houses and vineyards and fields … someday I will restore prosperity to them." (Jer. 32:1-15, 44)

Like Jeremiah of old, Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) has heard God's call to invest in the future. We do this by investing in the hopes and dreams of low income people in the developing world—people and places that are usually ignored by banks because they are deemed too high a risk. But our experience shows that the poor are bankable; through MEDA, they can obtain loans to start or strengthen small businesses that provide for their families, employ their neighbors, enrich their communities and contribute to peace and stability in their countries. Best of all, donations given for loans are gifts that keep on giving—a grant can be used once, but money given for loans keeps on cycling through a community as it is repaid, providing assistance over the long term.

You can declare your hope for the future by investing in the hopes and dreams of poor people around the world. You can do this by "purchasing" shares in projects from the MEDA Store. To do this, simply indicate the number of shares you want to "purchase," mark the project name and number on your check and send it to MEDA. You can also "purchase" a product by credit card by visiting www.meda.org or by calling 1-800-665-7026. All "purchases" from the MEDA Store are tax receiptable.

PROJET
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Send your contributions to:

(Canada): MEDA, 302-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2
(U.S.): 1821 Oregon Pike, Suite 201, Lancaster, PA 17601

Founded in 1953, MEDA is an association of Christians who want to "connect their faith and work in a needy world." The "purchase" of shares from the MEDA Store is a symbolic way for you to participate in MEDA's efforts to help people in low income countries find hope, opportunity and economic well-being through a business-oriented approach to development.

BUILD BANKS IN HAITI

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. It has been wracked by decades of brutal dictatorial governments, civil war and poverty. But even in these difficult circumstances, Haitians are looking to the future by starting small businesses. MEDA is helping them through its Village Banks—small lending institutions that serve poor people who cannot qualify for loans from local banks. Today there are 257 banks with 7,000 clients in 22 communities. MEDA wants to expand this award-winning program so that even more poor people have access to credit. **MEDA funds required:** $66,000 per year over the next three years to obtain $2.8 million from the U.S. and Canadian governments—every dollar given to MEDA for this project is multiplied 14 times. $66 "buys" one share of this project, enabling MEDA to obtain $924 in matching funds. On average, it costs $16,000 to start one bank. **Mark your check Village Banks, MS #1.**

CREATE A NEW FUTURE IN ROMANIA

After overthrowing Communism in 1989, Romanians looked to a brighter future. But high unemployment and a faltering economy has made life difficult for many. For a lot of Romanians, the solution is simple–leave. "A lot of my friends have gone to places like Germany and France to build a better life," says Viorel Postalache. "But if we all leave, who will build this country?" With help from a joint MEDA/World Vision lending and business training program, called CAPA, Viorel is helping build a better future for Romania through his successful taxi company. "There was no other place for me to go to get a loan," he says. "CAPA is helping me grow." MEDA wants to help more people like Viorel by expanding the CAPA program. **MEDA funds required:** $120,000 to obtain a $1.5 million grant from the Canadian government—every dollar given to this project will be matched 12.5 times. $12 "buys" one share of this project, enabling MEDA to obtain $150 in matching funds; $120 provides MEDA with $1,500 in matching funds. **Mark your check Romania, MS #2.**

CHANGE LIVES IN NORTH AMERICA

Although MEDA is well-known for its work in the developing world, we also invest in the future in North America by providing business training to low income people through ASSETS—people like Eve Allen and Kim Duszynski of Toledo, Ohio. Like other single mothers, the two found it hard to make ends meet. They worked for a local cleaning company, but career options were limited and wages were low. They quit to start their own cleaning business, but problems soon arose: they knew how to clean, but not how to run a business. They turned to ASSETS Toledo. "It changed our lives," says Eve of the program, which is supported by MEDA's Northwest Ohio chapter and the Toledo Mennonite Church. "We learned all the things we needed to do to make our business successful." Since 1993 MEDA has helped create 436 full and part time jobs for people like Eve and Kim through ASSETS programs. This year MEDA wants to start five new ASSETS programs in Abbotsford, B.C.; Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, PA; Peoria, IL; and Elkhart/Goshen, IN. **MEDA funds required:** It costs MEDA $15,000 to get each new program up and running. $15 "buys" one share of this project. **Mark your check ASSETS, MS #3.**

CHANGE THE WAY WE SEE THE WORLD

What is the future of tourism? Many people say it is environmentally friendly tourism, a new way of seeing a foreign country that preserves the environment, respects local cultures and provides maximum economic benefit for local people through job creation. People in Nicaragua would like to welcome tourists to see their country in this new way, but they need help. MEDA would like to help them explore the possibilities for a viable environmentally friendly tourist industry in that country. **MEDA funds required:** $30,000. $30 "buys" one share of this project. **Mark your check Tourism, MS #4.**

INVEST IN THE FUTURE OF MISSION IN MEXICO

At MEDA's 2000 convention, Mennonite World Conference President Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia called for a new way for churches in the North and South to do mission—a way that involves business and church-to-church partnerships. MEDA is heeding his call by responding to requests from Mennonite churches in Mexico City to help them reach out to their community by offering business training to low income entrepreneurs. The program, based on MEDA's award-winning ASSETS program, is called Micro MEDA Mexico; its goal is to help local churches improve the lives of people in their community. **MEDA funds required:** $15,000. $15 "buys" one share in this project. **Mark your check Mexico, MS #5.**

GIVE THE POOR SOME CREDIT IN TANZANIA

The number one need for running a business is credit—unless you're independently wealthy, you need a loan to start up, buy tools and inventory, and advertise. But it isn't easy to get a loan if you are poor. Banks won't lend to you, and forget about credit cards—you don't have one. Where can you go if you need money for your small business? For many people like Tanzanian restaurant owner Mselem Ally, that place is MEDA.

His loan of $1,300 enabled him to buy food in bulk, qualifying him for discounts. Now his profits have increased by 50 percent; he dreams of leaving a thriving family business for his children. MEDA wants to help more Tanzanians like Mselem by expanding its loan program in that country. **MEDA funds required:** $140,000 a year for the next three years. $14 "buys" one share in this project. **Mark your check Tanzania, MS #6.**

HELP BOLIVIANS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GLOBALIZATION

Felix Calisaya's first MEDA loan was for $600. The Santa Cruz, Bolivia furniture maker used the money to buy equipment for his small one-man business. Today he has 12 employees, his business is worth $50,000 and he does $2-3.000 a month in sales of handcrafted tables, chairs and other items. Felix overcame a lot of obstacles to get to where he is today, but now he faces another big challenge—globalization. Barriers that kept other South American countries from selling in Bolivia are coming down. This is a threat, but it's also an opportunity—he and other Bolivian furniture makers can sell their products in other countries, also. But to compete successfully, they will need help with marketing, quality control and other training—help that MEDA wants to provide. **MEDA funds required:** $40,000. $40 "buys" one share of this project. **Mark your check Globalization, MS #7.**

MAKE WORK SAFE FOR CHILDREN

Adults should work and kids should play. But in many developing countries, children need to do some work to help the family meet its basic needs. MEDA is working with other development agencies and the Egyptian government to help make family businesses in that country safe places for children to work. This includes developing tools for businesses and humanitarian agencies to use in identifying dangers for children in the workplace; providing education to families about workplace safety; helping the Egyptian government come up with policies and regulations; and working with other development agencies to come up with realistic approaches to the issue of child labor. **MEDA funds required:** $60,000. $60 "buys" one share in this project. **Mark your check Child Labor, MS #8.**

GIVE FROM THE (PALM) HEART

People in Europe like palm hearts, a vegetable delicacy used on pizzas and in salads. Farmers in Peru grow palm hearts—good ones—and in an environmentally friendly way. It sounds like a good match, but there's a problem: Peruvian palm hearts grown by poor farmers aren't up to the quality demanded by European consumers. With a bit of technical assistance and training, quality can be improved and the farmers can access this potentially huge market. MEDA wants to provide that assistance so the farmers can improve their lives, and escape the temptation to provide for their families by growing coca to make cocaine. **MEDA funds required:** $50,000. $50 "buys" one share of this project. **Mark your check Palm Hearts, MS #9.**

GROW A BUSINESS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Carlota Mucavel is like a lot of vendors in the market in Maputo, Mozambique. It's a hand-to-mouth existence; revenue from sales must be used to replenish inventory. With luck, there's enough profit to support the family. What about expanding the business, so she can earn more for her family? It's very hard to do—it isn't easy to set aside money to grow a business. That's where MEDA comes in, providing credit to people like Carlota—people who are ignored by local banks.

The average MEDA loan is about $250, although some are as small as $90. Generally, loans are made to groups of five people, who keep each other accountable for repayment. MEDA has 60 groups in the market; two-thirds of clients are women. MEDA wants to expand this program to enable more vendors to obtain credit. **MEDA funds required:** $135,000. $13.50 "buys" one share of this project. **Mark your check Mozambique, MS #10.**

Put your savings to work to end poverty!

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Baltimore-Washington new City on a Hill

NEWTON, Kan.—Nearly two months after a hijacked plane slammed into the Pentagon, unleashing military attacks on Afghanistan and anthrax fears in this country, the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area has been selected as the City on a Hill for 2002.

"Now is an especially important time to help spread light and hope in our nation's capital," says Marilyn Miller, director of outreach ministries for the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

City on a Hill grants, awarded by CHM and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), are intended to provide encouragement as well as seed money to holistic urban ministry programs in North America that exhibit a commitment to evangelism, service and peacemaking.

Baltimore-Washington has "a natural clustering of churches to provide us with the resources that we need to undertake this project [and] is a large, diverse area that has Mennonite congregations from four different [area] conferences; however, it is at the edge of each," notes its City on a Hill proposal.

The conferences are Allegheny, Atlantic Coast, Lancaster and Virginia. The participating congregations are Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church; Fourth Street Community Fellowship and Glory to God Ministry Church in Washington; Vietnamese Christian Fellowship in Falls Church, Va.; Northern Virginia Mennonite Church in Fairfax, Va.; Wilkens Avenue Mennonite Church in Baltimore; and North Baltimore Mennonite Church.

In addition, there are a number of Mennonite-related ministries in the area: the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office; Jubilee Association, a social services provider for people with disabilities and a member of Mennonite Health Services; Ten Thousand Villages stores in Baltimore and Alexandria, Va.; Mennonite Voluntary Service and MCC volunteer units in Washington; and an Eastern Mennonite Missions Youth Evangelism Service (YES) training center in Baltimore.

For its City on a Hill project, Baltimore-Washington wants to plant at least two new congregations "and encourage our existing congregations" to think about new ways to minister. Plans include reconciling Korean-American and African-American businesspeople, an Anabaptist peace center, a tutoring and computer center, and a Vietnamese Big Brother/Big Sister program.

"If we look at the past, it may not seem that there has been a lot of cooperation among the churches in this metro area," the proposal says. "If we look to the future, however, there is a lot of potential to develop relationships that will strengthen our witness. As one Washington pastor said, 'If Baltimore-Washington can apply together to host the Olympics in 2012, why can't we do a City on a Hill project together?' "

CHM initiated the City on a Hill program in 1994, alternating annual awards between the United States and Canada. MBM joined the program in 2000.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

There is a lot of potential to develop relationships that will strengthen our witness.

—Baltimore-Washington City on a Hill proposal

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Habitat for Humanity, MCC begin Jordan work

AMMAN, Jordan—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Habitat for Humanity last month signed an agreement to help provide affordable and durable homes in Jordan, where purchasing power has steadily declined since the Gulf War.

Work is scheduled to begin this fall in Al Himmeh, a village perched on the Yarmouk River bank overlooking the Golan Heights and where most household incomes are below the poverty line. A local committee is already in place and raising funds to match resources contributed by MCC and Habitat for Humanity.

The program builds on existing MCC involvement in Al Himmeh (previously known as Mukheibeh), where since the early 1980s MCC has provided grants and loans and assisted with beekeeping, sewing and other income-generation projects. Most recently a revolving loan fund has made it possible for 34 families to build cement-block houses to replace crumbling mud-wall structures.

Housing loans in the MCC-Habitat program will be provided on a not-for-profit basis. Loan recipients will pay 3 percent interest to compensate for inflation, allowing the fund to build more houses for more families on an ongoing basis.—*Deborah Fast for MCC News Service*

Feeding the multitude

Members and guests of Ninth Street Mennonite Church in Saginaw, Mich., enjoy a fellowship banquet Sept. 30 as part of the congregation's 50th anniversary celebration Sept. 28-30. The weekend featured historical presentations, reflections by former pastors and recognition of former voluntary service workers, who led summer Bible schools starting in the late 1940s. Ninth Street began under the auspices of Mennonite Board of Missions, as a mission church among Saginaw's African-American population. Today the congregation has a membership of 42.

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East Africans focus of Seattle ministry

Ethiopian immigrant looking to help other newcomers

SEATTLE—Although Sisay Desalegn left his home in Ethiopia to travel halfway around the world, he still maintains a ministry with his fellow East Africans. But the main focus of his ministry has now shifted to Seattle.

On Sept. 30, Desalegn was commissioned as Mennonite Board of Missions urban ministry director for Seattle, working with immigrants to Seattle, especially those from the Horn of Africa—Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan.

Desalegn came to the United States four years ago. Having participated in a Mennonite church in Ethiopia, he leafed through the Seattle phone book and found Seattle Mennonite Church. "It was by divine appointment," Desalegn says.

After talking with the pastor about his vision for ministry, he soon became involved in ministering with fellow East Africans. Seattle Mennonite Church eagerly embraced Desalegn and his vision of ministry to East Africans in the Seattle area. The congregation provides 100 percent of Desalegn's financial support.

Desalegn will focus on four areas of ministry: preaching and sharing the gospel with East Africans, helping them adjust to the local culture, counseling and fellowshipping with them. He will also return to Ethiopia for four months in January to teach in a Bible college there.

One of Desalegn's key ministries currently is to the Lost Boys, orphans from the civil war in Sudan. The Seattle group, which includes one girl, range in age from 17 to 25.

"God has opened a door to minister to the Lost Boys," Desalegn says. "They fled to Kenya and recently came to the United States. They don't know where their families are. It requires a whole lot of healing."

He has helped them adjust to their new life in the United States, working with schools to find proper placement for the boys, who often lack the educational background associated with their age. He also helps them reconcile their differences based on varied ethnic backgrounds.

Desalegn recently encountered an unexpected need to offer counseling with the Sudanese after the terrorist attacks in the United States on Sept. 11. Although accustomed to violence in their native land, they were dismayed by it in their new home country.

"They saw the United States as a safe haven, so it was a shock to them," Desalegn said.

He hopes to develop Christian leaders among the Sudanese to assist in his work. "I've selected three people who have a heart for the Lord and am training them to be responsible leaders," he says. "I'm giving them material, sharing my life experiences and showing them how to be strong."—*Gary Kauffman for MBM News Service*

God opened a door to minister to the Lost Boys. . . . It requires a whole lot of healing.

—Sisay Desalegn

The Mennonite
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12 Turning meetings into holy ground
14 Between truth and grace
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25 Conferences affirm new denomination

a new magazine for a new church

It's almost here.

The Mennonite will premier its new look with our Jan. 8, 2002, issue. Some features of the new format include:

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- Use of full-color
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Our new look features input from you, our readers. We're excited about these changes and think you will be, too.

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Enrollment at MSEC schools tops 6,000

LANCASTER, Pa.—Enrollment at the 18 Mennonite Secondary Education Council (MSEC)-member schools is up by 516 students this fall. Total head count is 6,254, compared with 5,738 last year.

Enrollment was boosted by the recent addition of Lake Center Christian School in Hartville, Ohio. The school, which is also a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Council, is in the process of adding high school grades. Lake Center currently has 398 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Some MSEC members are high schools only, while others offer middle and elementary schools.

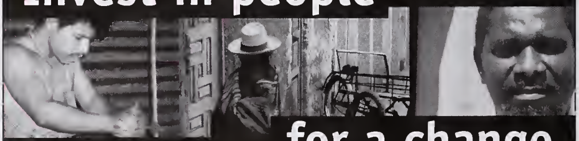
Mennonite Church Canada makes appointments

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Church Canada has completed the roster for its international ministries department. Peter Rempel, Africa and Europe administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission, will continue that work for Mennonite Church Canada. In a joint appointment with Mennonite Mission Network, Sheldon Sawatzky will be the administrator for Asia, working out of Newton, Kan. Gordon Janzen will be administrator for Asia and the Middle East, as well as pastoral care coordinator for international workers.

Among other appointments, Brad Reimer, currently associate director of Mennonite Voluntary Service in Winnipeg, will become associate director of Christian Service Ministries.—*Canadian Mennonite*

this date in Mennonite history

Nov. 13, 1963—Japanese Mennonites and Brethren in Christ agree to start an inter-Mennonite church newspaper.



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GIFTS THAT GIVE TWICE

Births

Aquilar, Manuel Subin, Oct. 24, to Manuel and Lori Sommers Aquilar, Sarasota, Fla.

Davis, Colby Ward, Oct. 13, to Ward and Erica Koehn Davis, Hutchinson, Kan.

Dula, Mesa Andrew, Sept. 20, to Andrew and Michelle Witmer Dula, Lancaster, Pa.

Hefferon, Mikayla Rose, Oct. 1, to Angela Hefferon, New Haven, Conn.

Hostetler, Sidney Ray, Oct. 29, to Emily and Kenton Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.

Lizzio, Lorenzo Isaiah, July 30, to Jessica Lizzio, Chicago.

Munoz, Sol, July 16, to Carena Munoz and Greg Gunter, Chicago.

Wade, Tayren Jackson, Oct. 10, to Kary Wade, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Western, Elizabeth Lynn, Oct. 23, to Brian and Marie Lyndaker Western, Lowville, N.Y.

Yoder, Kirsten Danae, Sept. 23, to Steve and Lori Yoder Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.

Marriages

Ackerman/Swartzendruber: Chris Ackerman, Phoenix, and Dan Swartzendruber, Phoenix, Sept. 16.

Chandler/Swartzendruber: Gary Chandler, Bad Axe, Mich., and Marcie Swartzendruber, Pigeon, Mich., Oct. 6.

Deaths

Guntz, James B., 80, Collegeville, Pa., died Oct. 13 of a stroke. Spouse: Lizzie Guntz. Parents: John and Elizabeth Guntz (deceased). Other survivors: children Harold, Evelyn Maust, Russell, Carol Maust; 21 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 17 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City, Pa.

Hochstetler, Lizzie E., 94, Kalona, Iowa, died Oct. 17. Parents: Emanuel and Mary Zook Hochstetler (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 22 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Harold J., 91, Wayland, Iowa, died Oct. 7. Spouse: Louise Kauffman (deceased). Parents: William and Susan Nafsinger Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Jean Roth, Joyce Wagler, Janice Widmer, Judy Robertson, Joe, John; 16 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 10 at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Larrew, Loyd, 82, Beaver, Ore., died Oct. 16. Spouse: Alice Gingerich Larrew. Parents: Frank and May Larrew (deceased). Other survivors: children Wendell, Catherine Ervin; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at Tillamook, Ore.

Saner, Elsie Graber, 97, Freeman, S.D., died Oct. 3. Spouse: Chris J. Saner (deceased). Parents: Peter and Freni Graber (deceased). Survivors: children Delmer, Jerroll; nine grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 8 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Simonson, Florence Weaver, 90, Washington, Ill., died Oct. 18. Spouse: (1st) Max Baltz (deceased); (2nd) Oben Simonson (deceased). Parents: Avery and Magdalena Ingold Weaver (deceased). Memorial service: Oct. 22 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

Waltner, Arlene Schrag, 82, Freeman, S.D., died Sept. 29 of a stroke. Spouse: Earl Waltner (deceased). Parents: John P. and Francis Schrag (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 3 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

classifieds

- **DEO,** a new Anabaptist program that gives emphasis to teaching, outreach and re-entry for young adults who wish to encounter God in learning and experiencing mission in urban and cross-cultural settings, is seeking candidates for ***DEO director***. In partnership, the Mennonite Mission Network and the DEO board seeks to find a director who will lead in planning, coordinating and administering DEO ministries which will operate based in Newton, Kan. The director will lead the envisioning and the development of the program, select, train and orient DEO staff and lead in recruitment and selection of participants. Qualifications include a commitment to Jesus Christ harmonious with Anabaptist word-and-deed evangelism that esteems service, proclamation and justice as parts of the same whole. A positive role model with abilities to both lead and collaborate, this person needs experience in program leadership and budget management, practical knowledge of North American youth and adult culture, good communication skills and ability to travel independently.

For a complete position description and steps for application, go to job openings at <www.Mennonitemission.net>, call Human Resources at 219-294-7523, or email <staffrecruitment@Mennonitemission.net>.

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- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates May 1, July 15 and Aug. 15) and couples in 2002 and 2003.

  For information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Mennonite Home of Albany, Ore.**, seeks a ***foundation director*** to provide leadership for a major capital fund drive, planned giving programs and special fund-raising projects. Experience in development and fund raising are preferable.

  Please send a resume to Ron Litwiller, Mennonite Home of Albany, 5353 Columbus St., Albany, OR 97321; 541-928-7232; <ron@mennonitehome.com>; Web site <Mennonitehome.com>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** is accepting applications for a full-time ***4th-grade teaching position*** beginning in January 2002. Lake Center is a K-8 school of 400 students in Hartville, Ohio (Akron/Canton area).

  For an application or further information, contact Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2049, or <lccsprincipal@yahoo.com>; Lake Center Christian School, 12893 Kaufman Ave. NW, Hartville, OH 44632.

- **Goshen College** is seeking candidates for two new half-time positions with possibility of combining them for qualified person:

  Associate campus pastor: Provides leadership to encourage young adults toward church vocations. Identify students, find ministry opportunities, work with churches. M.Div. or master's degree in related field required. Fluency in English and Spanish preferred.

  Youth ministry director: Develop and administer youth ministry initiative of the Bible, religion and philosophy department. Teach two classes, help recruit and advise students, arrange internships, develop media information and present at conferences. M.Div. or master's in related field required with 5 years of youth ministry experience required with interest in additional graduate studies. Seeking energetic, self-motivated person to build new program.

  Both positions require commitment to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

  To apply for either or both positions, please find listings on the employment page of <www.goshen.edu>. Contact Amy Hartman, 219-535-7707, email <amymh@goshen.edu> with questions. Indicate interest in one or both positions on personnel information form. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer; women and minority people are encouraged to apply.

- **Sarasota Christian School**, Sarasota, Fla., has a job opening for an ***athletic director***.

  Interested people should email Barbara Miller at <bmiller@sarasotachristian.org> or call 941-371-6481.

- **Central Christian School**, Kidron, Ohio, has an opening for a ***director of instrumental music*** beginning January 2002.

  Contact Fred Miller at 330-857-7311 or <FredMiller@CentralChristian.k12.oh.us>.

- **Perryton Mennonite Church**, a loving, caring congregation in the rural Texas Panhandle, is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Opportunities for growth and outreach. Interested people may contact Doug at 806-435-4558 or <ptnmenno@hotmail.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has a full-time ***science*** position for 2002-2003. Includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined. Active Christian commitment, membership in the Mennonite Church preferred, open integration of Christian Scripture and faith into teaching and personal life, dedication to effective teaching and love for young people are desirable.

  People interested in learning more about this position or in applying should call J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 540-432-4502; or write to 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** urgently needs ***country representatives*** for the Philippines, former Soviet Union, Guatemala and D.R. of Congo. These 4- to 5-year volunteer assignments require applicants with college degrees, overseas experience, language skills, communication, organizational and administration skills, strong Christian faith and a respect for a wide variety of people.

  Contact Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151 or <cdb@mcc.org> for a job description and more information.

- **Hesston College** seeks applicants for ***campus Web administrator and PC support***. Job includes software/hardware technical support to campus computer users and supervision of computer lab student employees. Qualifications: training and experience with web authoring, programming and database management, administrative skills, commitment to the mission of Hesston College. Position available immediately.

  Send resume and references to Linda Stucky, Director of Information Technology, Hesston College, P.O. Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For more information, call 620-327-8102 or email <lindas@hesston.edu>.

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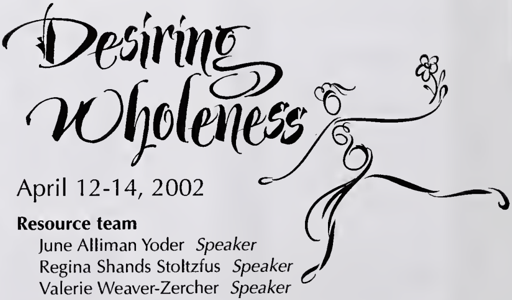

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by Gordon Houser

Against the grain of a culture that reads less and less, give or ask for books this Christmas. Below are some titles you might consider, listed according to subject.

To begin, try *Book Lover's Guide to Great Reading: A Guided Tour of Classic & Contemporary Literature* by Terry W. Glaspey (InterVarsity Press, 2001, $9.99). This book is written "to help you sort through the overwhelming number of options so that you can spend your reading time on the very best books." While I don't agree with all his choices, Glaspey's selection—under such topics as classic writings, poetry, books to help you grow in your spiritual life, contemporary fiction and great books for young readers—is thorough and helpful. He offers annotations and even suggests certain translations. He includes a one-year plan for exploring Christian classics.

Justice: *Set Free: A Journey Toward Solidarity Against Racism* by Iris de León-Hartshorn, Tobin Miller Shearer and Regina Shands Stoltzfus (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99) looks at what Wendell Berry calls our "hidden wound." The three authors (a white man and two women of color) recount their experiences in working against racism. As Ched Myers writes in the foreword, "Racism can only be healed by the painful but cleansing fire and ice of the truth." Truth can be hard, but it sets us free.

From 1995 to 2001, Art Gish made five different trips to the West Bank as a volunteer with Christian Peacemaker Teams. *Hebron Journal: Stories of Nonviolent Peacemaking* (Herald Press, 2001, $17.99) recounts his experiences there with people trying to bring peace and hope in the midst of violent conflict. He includes a historical perspective of Hebron, plus photos, drawings and maps. Ever positive, Gish writes: "To engage in the struggle, armed only with faith, hope and love, is a wonderful opportunity. It is too good to turn down."

Theology: *The Nonviolent Atonement* by J. Denny Weaver (Eerdmans, 2001, $22) is the product of 25 years of research and conversation. He seeks to expose "the centuries-long use of Christian theology to accommodate violence both systemic and direct." Without challenging that Jesus saves, Weaver challenges one way of talking about how Jesus saves.

The Politics of the Cross: The Theology and Social Ethics of John Howard Yoder by Craig A. Carter (Brazos Press, 2001, $18.99) is the first systematic treatment of the Mennonite theologian's extensive writings. Carter writes, "The ecumenical significance of Yoder's work is … that he presents a strong case for peace being at the heart of the biblical gospel as it is enshrined in the creeds of orthodox Christianity."

A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy and Postmodernity by Stanley Hauerwas (Brazos Press, 2001, $19.99) contains 14 essays by the man *Time* recently named "the best theologian in the United States." This is ironic, given what Hauerwas writes about America. For example, "The fundamental presuppositions that shaped much of American life and government were meant to destroy or at least marginalize the church." While focusing on the church and ethics, these essays address a number of topics. Hauerwas offers his usual provocative comments: "The church's commitment to maintain marriage as lifelong monogamous fidelity may well prove to be one of the most powerful tactics we have to resist capitalism."

While *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov* by Paul Valliere (Eerdmans, 2001, $42) may seem obscure, these Russian Orthodox thinkers, who wrote between 1850 and 1930, dealt with issues relevant to Mennonites. They challenged the separation of Orthodox from society and called for engagement with the world. Bukharev, for example, wrote, "Orthodoxy is a heavenly treasure, but Orthodox people obscure the fact by apathy, lack of faith and failure to share the treasure with their neighbors, including the West."

Spirituality: Ronald Rolheiser, author of the wonderful book *The Holy Longing*, comes through again in *Against an Infinite Horizon* (Crossroad, 2001, $16.95). Faith is not certitude, he writes, but "a way of seeing things. … When we have the eyes of faith we see a certain divine glow shimmering within the ordinary, just as we see all that is ordinary against a horizon of the eternal."

Paul Wilkes visited a Trappist monastery each month for a year. He reports in *Beyond the Walls: Monastic Wisdom for Everyday Life* (Doubleday, 1999, $21) that monasteries offer not an escape but a way of living a grace-filled life in the world.

For those wanting to delve deeper into Celtic Christianity, try *The Spirituality of the Celtic Saints* by Richard J. Woods (Orbis, 2000, $16). Woods presents a thorough, unsentimental treatment of Celtic (not just Irish) saints and shows the relevance of their message.

Look for more recommendations in next month's Mediaculture column.

videos

The Dish (PG-13) is based on the true story of a satellite dish in the middle of a sheep paddock outside a small town in Australia that NASA uses to broadcast the first moon walk in July 1969. This charming film is funny yet poignant as it brings its various characters to life.

music

One Heart ($17 postpaid) is a new CD by J.D. Martin (Jerry Derstine). While the 10 songs here sound similar, each offers strong vocals and clear production quality. The lyrics speak of a connectedness with all creation. My favorite is "I Will Not Be Moved," an anthem to racial justice. Order from Slipstream Productions, P.O. Box 422, Snowmass, CO 81654, <www.jdmartin.ws>.

films

Apocalypse Now Redux (R), one of the greatest American films ever, returns with some added footage, mostly of an unnecessary, didactic scene. This searing film depicts the hell of the Vietnam War to probe its heart of darkness.

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Everett J. Thomas

Permanence for a time of uncertainty

As we observe Bible Sunday on Nov. 18, more Bibles will be in the hands of Christians than ever before. Since Sept. 11, sales of the Bible have gone up 40 percent over the same period last year. According to one news account, publishers are shipping 100,000 each day.

These sales indicate that many of us in the United States are turning to the Bible for security. In a time of fear and uncertainty, there is little else one can buy that carries such permanence and comfort. But it is possible to abuse the Bible in a time such as this.

In his article (page 5) Eddy Hall says that the Christian life "is not a relationship with a book. It is a relationship with a Person." For Hall, the Bible is the window through which we are invited to know the Person.

Bible Sunday is the day to honor this window. It is a day to reflect on the Bible's centrality in our lives and for our faith.

It is also a day to remind ourselves of its permanence. In spite of any efforts to employ its words for our own means, it remains unaffected. For example, some try to prove that the Bible has an internal consistency and that such a consistency proves something. But as a young adult, I recall finding 30 places where one verse of the Bible directly contradicted another verse elsewhere. Others use the Bible to get answers for each of life's decisions. But as Hall points out (page 5), by using the Bible as a handbook for daily life, we run the risk of "relating to the Bible as the Pharisees did—as little more than a rule book."

The miracle of the Bible is that it remains unchanged in the face of any efforts to twist its meanings.

The miracle of the Bible is that it remains unchanged in the face of any effort to twist its meanings toward our purposes. We can also take comfort in knowing that no one else can alter the Bible for their purposes either.

The Bible is really a library of stories, histories, poetry, wisdom literature, hymns, letters and visions. This library is stuffed with testimonies to the way God has worked in the world. The collection has not changed since the fourth century. Although there are minor differences in various Christian Bibles (the Jerusalem Bible, for example, includes five books that are not in the Protestant Bible), Christians around the world have been reading the same stories for centuries.

"We recognize the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament as belonging to inspired Scripture," says the commentary section of Article 4 in Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

While Mennonites primarily focus on the New Testament (and the teachings of Jesus in particular), our confession of faith reminds us that the Bible is more than those 27 books. The 39 books in the Old Testament are often overlooked. But as one of my seminary professor once commented, we can understand the New Testament only when we understand the Old Testament. For example, a recent Adult Bible Study lesson on Matthew 5:1-16 noted that "this sermon on the mountain is intended to reflect and update the giving of the Law through Moses at Mount Sinai."

In addition to the synergy between the Old Testament and the New Testament, another critical characteristic of the Bible is that it was not written in English. In the congregation I attended as a boy, the big debate was over whether to begin using the Revised Standard Version. I recall one RSV supporter joking about an elderly woman who declared, "If the King James Version was good enough for the apostle Paul, it is good enough for me!"

Unless we read Hebrew or Greek, we are already one step removed from the nuances and connotations of the original words in their historical and cultural contexts. Consequently, we trust Spirit-filled men and women to treat the original languages with reverence as they translate ancient languages into our own.

The Bible deserves special celebration each year, if for no other reason than to re-establish its centrality in our lives. While this library of holy writings is not God, we look through it and receive assurance that God's ancient Word remains unchanged in a world that is suddenly filled with fear and insecurity.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

November 22, 2005

give thanks

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

From the outside

Thanks for publishing Eloise Hiebert Meneses' excellent article "The Virtues and Vices of 'Mennonite' Culture" (Oct. 30). Something like this should be published in pamphlet form to give to "outsiders," who could then better understand what they are getting into. It might help them to know whether or not they want to, as Meneses says, "adapt to the dominant culture in order to be fully accepted." Mennonite Church USA leaders should take this article seriously in the context of the denominational vision to be missional in nature.—*Gary Olsen-Hasek, Gresham, Ore.*

Peace positions

Thank you to Karl S. Shelly for so eloquently validating my feeings and thoughts ("To Witness for Peace in a Time of War," Speaking Out, Oct. 30). I have had a difficult time coming to terms with what happened in New York and the resulting feelings of shock, sadness and anger. It has been difficult for me to read the letters and articles that seem to suggest that the United States deserved what happened because of the past behaviors of its government. Such letters and articles do seem to lessen the tragedy.

Yes, we must not become self-righteous in our belief that we know the will of God and that our way of seeing things is the only truth. The real truth is that we do not know for sure what the will of God is in this situation. What we do know for sure is that God wants justice for all his people. I, for one, will not presume to tell others what God wants done in this situation. I have been to Auschwitz and have come to believe that there would have been no peaceful way to stop such evil. This experience leads me to ask myself, "Is there a peaceful solution to the current situation?" I do not have the answer this question. My sincerest prayer is that there is. My greatest hope is that if there is a peaceful solution, we find it.

In the October issue of the Indiana-Michigan Conference *Gospel Evangel,* Ryan Miller says to imagine 1,400 Mennonites gathering in a candlelight vigil. I ask my fellow Mennonites to imagine more than 100,000 Mennonites writing to their representatives in government telling them that they do not want war but want alternatives to end this violence and bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice.

I do not want to be a pacifist. Rather, I want to be a peacemaker, as Jesus was. We need to work for peace, not just talk among ourselves and write letters to our church publications, and not just pray. The leaders of our country do not read our church publications, they do not hear our prayers, nor do they always listen to God. But they do listen to people who vote for them. Let us be peacemakers and make our voices heard for God and his justice. —*Debbie Markiewicz, Mason, Mich.*

Coming from a background outside the Mennonite church and having been raised in a very dogmatic religion (Mormonism), I have had some strong thoughts on what I have read in *The Mennonite* since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11. At first, I was concerned when I read so many editorials, articles and letters to the editor that seemed to be propounding one particular viewpoint, that of total pacifism. I have been pleased, however, to read letters to the editor since then that have expressed divergent views. This was what I had been used to in *The Mennonite* and one thing I value highly, coming from a religion where any thinking that is contrary to accepted, leader-approved teachings is highly discouraged and certainly wouldn't be allowed in any official church magazine. Thank you for your willingness to allow a public forum for all Mennonites on the reasons for the terrorist attacks and the U.S. response to them and for publishing letters expressing varying viewpoints on those events.—*Suzanne Roth, Canby, Ore.*

We will never have peace on earth until Christ comes back. According to Matthew 24, there will be wars and rumors of wars in the last days, and I think the time must be getting close for the Lord's return.

Of course we should try to defuse violence before it starts, but sometimes more has to be done. In Luke 22:36, Christ told his disciples to sell their cloak and buy a sword. If they weren't to defend themselves, why did he tell them that? My great-grandfathers and four great-uncles fought in the Civil War to free the slaves. How

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**

PONTIUS?
PRESENT.
WHEN GOD CALLS US, WE'RE EXPECTED TO RESPOND WITH A LIFE OF WITNESS AND SERVICE.
HUH. AND ALL THIS TIME I THOUGHT GOD WAS JUST TAKING ATTENDANCE.

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theMennonite
Incorporating *Gospel Herold* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)
The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

long do you think slavery would have existed without that war? Just how would you have stopped slavery?—*Dorothy D. Liechty, Berne, Ind.*

The gift of song

The Oct. 16 editorial ("Singing, the Prayers We Breathe") was very much appreciated. Coming amid the heaviness and near-saturation level of concern about events of the previous month, it was to me a breath of fresh air. Although I'm not much of a singer, I do enjoy making "a cheerful noise" and listening to others as we share together in a cappella fashion. Whether our singing is the result of the bonds we feel or creates those bonds, it is a gift I trust we can use to "help the world to sing."

Our congregation, First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va., is offering an elective Sunday school class in the coming winter quarter dealing with the history of Christian hymnody. The class will be led by a member of our church who has come to us from another tradition. He wants to help us expand our knowledge and understanding of our musical heritage as well as learn one another's songs. The class outline proposes to take us from Gregorian chant through the *Ausbund* hymnal to African-American and 20th-century music. I trust this effort is one way to "manage" our gift of singing and to "embrace each other's songs."—*Jim Good, Richmond, Va.*

Behind the cover

My first response to the Sept. 4 cover was like that of Mrs. Wallace Engel's (Readers Say, Oct. 30). I found it unattractive. When I read the story of the Coffee Man's three words that helped change a man's life forever ("The Coffee Man," Sept. 4), my heart echoed, "He loves me, too," and I left the magazine on our coffee table.—*Adella Kanagy, Belleville, Pa.*

**Cover photo
by CLEO Photography**

Thankfulness in action

How thankful are we, really?

by Bill D. Hallsted

His driver's license still smelled like warm plastic. He walked at least two inches taller, just knowing it was in his wallet.

He regarded it as fate that Aunt Mabel had to stop driving the same week. Aunt Mabel was 86. Her eyesight was really bad. She just couldn't pass the driving test this year. He was sad for her, but to be totally honest, he was happy, too.

You see, Aunt Mabel had a car. It wasn't new or anything. As a matter of fact, it was a 1980 model. But it only had 54,000 actual miles. Original paint. Original upholstery. Brand new tires. Brand new exhaust system, with lifetime warranty.

A car that old had little resale value. Besides, Aunt Mabel didn't need the money. He hoped Aunt Mabel might give him the car. After all, there was no point in it just sitting in her garage, now that she couldn't drive anymore.

So he visited Aunt Mabel. He showed her his still-warm driver's license. He casually mentioned the car. She responded just as he knew she would. Dear, sweet, predictable Aunt Mabel gave him her car. She just gave it to him. She asked him to take really good care of it. It was the last thing she and her late husband had bought together.

He may be as grateful as those who ignore life's joys and blessings but complain about every problem, every disappointment, every failure.

He assured her he would. He told her how grateful he was. He waxed eloquent about how lucky he was to have her for an aunt. He waved fondly as he drove off down the street.

The first thing he did was pick up three of his buddies and take them for a ride, just to show off his new wheels. He apologized that he couldn't peel out. It was, after all, only a four-cylinder engine. "You know how old fogies are," he said. "They want economy. They don't care if it takes 15 minutes to get up to 30 miles an hour, because they never get up to 30 anyway."

The guys all laughed, so he added some more. He told several stories about his Aunt Mabel's terrible driving. Some of the stories were even partly true. They had a great time making fun of Aunt Mabel, her driving and her ancient car.

The next thing he did was get a CD player and extra speakers, with the most awesome bass booster. You could feel the beat before you could even see the car. At first he turned the volume down as he passed Aunt Mabel's house on the way to school. After the first week he didn't bother, though. In fact, after that first week, he did not even notice when he passed her place.

Dinky, four-cylinder engine: The car had a stick-shift transmission. That was cool. He learned how to slip his foot off the clutch with the engine revved so he could peel out, even with that dinky, four-cylinder engine. He got rid of the quiet muffler with its lifetime guarantee. It didn't sound like little old Aunt Mabel anymore.

But then he began to gripe. He hated the color. He hated its age. He hated the mileage. It used oil. He hated that little sewing-machine motor that didn't even have fuel injection. It had a carburetor. And points in the distributor, whatever they were. And vinyl seat covers—in turquoise.

He made sure all his friends knew he just couldn't wait to get rid of the thing and get a real car. You know, something with a "Z" in the name. Something he wasn't ashamed to drive. Something that didn't look like a leftover from the Waltons.

But then he didn't have the car anymore. He popped the clutch once too many times, just a shade too quick. The car, with a shelled-out transmission, had a close encounter with a telephone pole.

He wasn't hurt. He wasn't even angry. He said it was just as well. Maybe now his folks would get him a real car.

Now the question: Was he thankful for Aunt Mabel's gift? Before you offer the obvious answer, be careful. He may be as grateful as the rest of us.

He may be as grateful as those who pray for a fine home, then, in order to pay for it, are

CLEO Photography

content to let the church building deteriorate and crumble in neglect.

He may be as grateful as those who pray for a job and then, when they have one, constantly find someone better off to compare themselves with. They wish for a job like theirs instead. They wish for a different supervisor. They wish for better co-workers. They complain about the pay.

He may be as grateful as those who pray for a life-mate, then, when the new wears off the relationship, tell their spouse, "Why can't you be more like … ?"

Complain: He may be as grateful as the couple that prays fervently for a healthy baby and then uses that baby as an excuse to absent themselves from the church. Because of the baby, they can't serve in the capacity they used to. They isolate themselves from God's people, avoid God's leading, then complain that they don't feel as close to God as they used to.

He may be as grateful as those who ignore life's joys and blessings but complain about every problem, every disappointment, every failure.

He may be as grateful as those who take life's pleasures for granted but enumerate, dwell on and be sure everyone knows about every pain.

He may be as grateful as. … Think about it. How grateful are we, really? Do our prayers spend more time on "Thank you" than they do on "Bless me, help me, gimme"? Can we spend more thought on "Praise God" than "problem"?

Can we pray for five minutes without ever asking God for anything? Is it possible for us to pray a complete prayer that is restricted to thanks and praise? Try it.

We have a Thanksgiving tradition in our family. During the whole week of Thanksgiving we try to trust God to supply our needs, without asking for anything. Throughout that week, we try to pray strictly with only words of thanks and praise, without even asking God's blessing on anything. No requests. Just praise and thanks.

Every year, as we try to live that tradition, I am reminded how much of a "gimme" mindset I have. I find it almost impossible to thank God without asking for something in the same breath. I find it even harder to remember what I was so grateful for last week or last month or last year, so I can give thanks again. (But I sure remember what I didn't get last week, the disappointment I suffered last month and how much I hurt last year.)

Selfishness: It isn't wrong to ask God for things. We are told in God's Word to do so. "Ask and it will be given to you," Jesus said (Matthew 7:7 NIV). But when asking for things becomes our sole or dominant reason for prayer, the balance has been tipped to selfishness, to using instead of serving God, and to a spirit of "gimme."

What a contrast that is with the attitude of the apostle Paul, who says, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want" (Philippians 4:12 NIV).

Paul instructs us to demonstrate our gratitude to God, "always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20 NIV).

In another place he says, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV).

Is it possible for us to pray a complete prayer that is restricted to thanks and praise? Try it.

Practice: This year, as we approach the Thanksgiving season, let's practice. Let's practice a few prayers that are exclusively thanks and praise. If you like the idea, join our family in simply trusting God to supply anything and everything you need without your asking, and restrict your prayers for the whole of Thanksgiving week to only praise and thanks. It's a wonderful experience.

Just as important, let's demonstrate, by how we use God's gifts and blessings, that we really do appreciate them. Let's also make it a point to respond with the kind of tangible gifts to God and the church that prove we really do know where it all comes from. Let's be truly thankful.

Bill D. Hallsted lives in Griffith, Ind.

The great attraction

by Sheldon Sawatzky

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.—John 12:32

In this statement we clearly see the intimate connection between the cross of Christ and his mission, the passion and death of Christ and his power to draw people to himself. Who draws? What is the attraction? How does Christ draw people? Who is attracted?

Who draws? Jesus, the Jesus of history, draws people. Jesus is not the Christ of our imaginings but of reality, of historic fact, the one who lived here among us and was seen, heard and handled by people and who died a real death to save real sinners from a real hell to a real heaven.

Our daughter and her husband minister to international students in the Chapel Hill, N.C., area through Bible studies and other activities. Our daughter shared a letter from a student from China named Lily. She wrote this email message after attending a pizza party and home group Bible study:

"You don't know how much I envy you. Maybe you guys are not wealthy, but you guys are so happy and peaceful in the heart, at least from my eyes. I don't have much to complain about. Everyone in my family is doing well and healthy. I have no financial difficulty. I have some good friends. My study is going OK. And I am healthy. If you ask me why I am sad, I cannot tell. I am just unhappy. I always feel I have a lot of burden, but I don't know what it is. … If I truly believe in God, I know my life will be much easier because it is myself who makes my life difficult, not my life. That is why I always say I need to find my spiritual homeland. But I just cannot persuade myself into [becoming] a Christian. I don't deny that one reason for me to join your home group is to improve my English. But after I get to know more and more about Christians, I cannot help envying the peace in your hearts and the happiness and satisfaction of your lives, which I want so much but I just cannot get. … I truly want to find my spiritual homeland so I don't want to pretend I am a Christian. So although my life is good, I am totally lost spiritually.
Lily"

At the next home group meeting a week later, Lily could resist no longer, and gave her heart and life to Jesus Christ. Jesus draws people as we are engaged in his mission. In our attitudes, lifestyle, deeds and words, people are attracted to the Jesus who lives within us.

Jesus lived here among us and was seen, heard and handled by people and died a real death to save real sinners from a real hell to a real heaven.

What is the attraction? The attraction is Christ "lifted up from the earth," Christ crucified on the cross. It is the crucified Christ alone who draws human beings. The uplifted Jesus in this text does not refer to lifting up Christ in our preaching, even though we must indeed lift up Christ to present him vividly to the world's gaze. Lifting up Christ does not refer to lifting him up through our praise and worship, even though that is essential. Our text signifies the lifting up of Jesus by his enemies in crucifixion. It is the crucified Christ, the Christ of Calvary, who draws.

It is the Christ whose blood was shed and whose body was broken who attracts. It is the Christ who gave himself in the place of sinners so that he might bear in himself the justified wrath of God against sin that draws. It is not a powerful, conquering messianic figure who attracts. This is what the Jews were looking for (John 12:34). No, it was in incredible weakness and shame that the Savior of the world died on a cross.

Christ's sacrificial and saving death on the cross is at the heart of the Christian faith and at the heart of the message we proclaim in mission to the world. Many people don't like the cross. The apostle Paul wrote, "Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Corinthians 1:22-23 NIV). To many the cross is not an attraction.

In "The Other Jesus" (*Newsweek*, March 27, 2000), religion editor Kenneth L. Woodward writes about how all the major religions of the world have dealt and are dealing with Jesus Christ, and in particular, Jesus Christ crucified. Hindus appreciate the god-consciousness, compassion and nonviolence of Jesus. They have even developed stories of Jesus slipping off to India as a young adult to learn yogic meditation and become a guru to his people. But Hindus cannot accept a Jesus who died a violent, agonizing death.

Foolishness: Neither can the Buddhists, who believe that a holy man would only die like the Buddha—a serene death, a calm passing to a final rebirth. In the article, a Buddhist philosopher says, "The figure of the crucified Christ is a very painful image to me. It does not contain joy or peace, and this does not do justice to Jesus." Crucifixion is foolishness.

The Muslim Quran identifies Jesus as a prophet born of a virgin, untouched by Satan, who does miracles of healing. However, *A reflection on the connection between the cross of Christ and his mission*

Muslims believe that Jesus asked God to save him from crucifixion, as the Gospels record, and that God answered his prayer by taking him directly up to heaven. God would not allow one of his true prophets to be killed. If Jesus had been crucified it would mean God had failed his prophet. Muslims believe that Christ will return from heaven and set the record straight by disproving the Christian myth of his crucifixion. It never happened. Crucifixion is foolishness.

Jews have begun to acknowledge Jesus as a great Jewish teacher whose teachings embody the Torah, the Jewish Scriptures. Jesus could not have been the Messiah, however, for there is no place for a Messiah who dies, much less as a criminal, as Jesus did. Crucifixion is a stumbling block.

Certainly there is a strong saving significance in Christ's resurrection. But the Bible also teaches just as clearly the powerful, saving effect of Christ's death: "God was pleased ... through [Christ] to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:19,20 NIV).

How the cross of Christ draws people: Christ crucified on a cross by the Roman government is the great attraction, the one who draws all people to himself in salvation. Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out" (John 12:31 NRSV).

1. In the cross we are able to see what is wrong with the philosophy of the world, what is evil in what sounds so right and necessary. Here the world's phony values are exposed. Here is revealed a standard by which the self-indulgence of the world may be measured.

The cross of Jesus Christ is the ultimate testimony to how bad sin is. The cross is the horrible death of history's one innocent person being executed as a criminal against the Roman Empire. Jesus died because of human sinfulness. Our wills are captivated by sin. Christ is lifted up, but we will not return to him unless he draws us.

2. At the cross we see the victory over sin and Satan. At the cross, Satan is judged because he put Christ, God incarnate as perfect man, to death. On the cross, Jesus bore the sins of the world and triumphed over all the powers of evil. His obedience unto death rendered powerless "the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14b NRSV).

The cross was Satan's undoing, but Satan's defeat was not an end in itself. It removed the obstacles to God's purpose of creating people fit for his kingdom. The cross is the victory of righteousness over evil, of love over hate, of God's way over Satan's way. In the cross the power of evil over us was broken and deliverance made possible for us.

3. Now, lifted up on the cross, Christ draws us unto himself because there on the cross he reveals his wonderful love and the love of God for us. The apostle Paul explains it this way: "Rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:7-8 NRSV). The cross demonstrates a love greater than dying for one's friends. It is a love that sacrifices one's life for enemies.

The second daughter of Queen Victoria was Princess Alice. She had a 4-year-old son who was the apple of her eye. When he came down with the disease known as "black diphtheria," Alice was overwhelmed with anxiety. The disease was highly contagious and deadly. Because of her own frail health, nurses attending the child repeatedly warned the princess to stay away from her son.

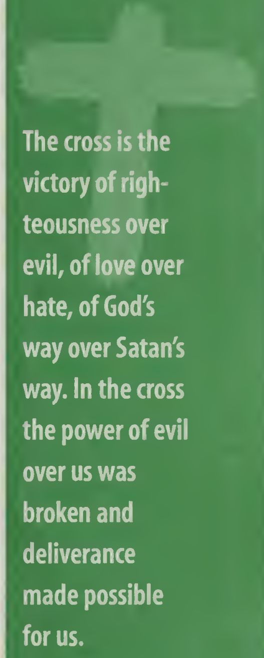
One day as Princess Alice stood in a far corner of her son's room to weep and pray for her beloved son, she heard him whisper to the nurse, "Why doesn't my mother kiss me anymore?"

Kisses of death: The princess-mother couldn't stand such a thought in the mind of her dying child, so she raced to his bed, held him in her arms and smothered him with kisses. They turned out to be kisses of death. The mother contracted the awful disease, and within a few days both mother and son were buried.

God loved us so deeply that he embraced us in our death throes, to be infected with our disease, die and be buried for us. God did not insulate himself from our predicament but came among us, took our sin in Christ on the cross and died for our redemption.

People are not usually driven to Christ by fear of sin and its consequences. He draws us. Most people are won to Christ by the tender drawing of Christ's love. God says in Hosea, "I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them" (11:4 NIV). How gentle, how gracious, how quiet, how effective is the drawing power of the crucified Christ!

This drawing power of love in the crucified



The cross is the victory of righteousness over evil, of love over hate, of God's way over Satan's way. In the cross the power of evil over us was broken and deliverance made possible for us.

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The great attraction
continued from page 7

In mission, we go to [Jesus] outside the camp, among the nations, where he is lifted up and continues to draw men and women from every tribe, tongue and nation.

Christ shows us how we as the body of Christ are engaged in God's mission in the world. We start with the Great Commandment in fulfilling the Great Commission. What God calls us to do is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The Great Commission is not a mere obligation but the pre-eminent expression of our love for God and for others.

Art McPhee, professor of missions and evangelism at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., says: "When you start with the Great Commandment, you will evangelize because you want to. When you start with the Great Commission, you will look for ways to manipulate. When you start with the Great Commandment, you will look for ways to care. When you start with the Great Commission, you will employ friendship as a gimmick. When you start with the Great Commandment, you will bestow friendship as a gift."

Who is attracted by Christ lifted up? Everyone. This is not about universalism. Not every individual who has ever lived will come to Christ and be saved. Millions of people live and die without coming to Christ. Everyone means all types of people—from every level of life and every race and nation—will come to Christ.

Last year the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) celebrated its centennial, 100 years of overseas mission. The gospel of the crucified Christ has been preached in the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America, among the outcasts in India, the peasants of China, the tribes of Congo, the poor in Brazil. It has been proclaimed in high places of government, in the dirtiest and most dangerous back alleys of cities. It has been preached to children and the aged, to the educated and the uneducated, to the favored and the disadvantaged, to Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Jews. Animists, atheists and men and women from each of these groups have turned to Jesus as the One able to cleanse them from sin and lead them in the way everlasting.

Christ's arms were outstretched on that cross to welcome all he draws, all who come to him. Jesus was crucified outside the city gate (Hebrews 13:12), outside the walls of the religious establishment, outside in the world, on the garbage heap, among the unclean, among the nations. In mission, we go to him outside the camp, among the nations, where he is lifted up and continues to draw men and women from every tribe, tongue and nation.

Pat and Rad Houmphan, COM missionaries, work among the Isaane people in northeastern Thailand. The Isaane, who are Buddhist, told them about their tradition that says a god of goodness and compassion will come to save the world. When Pat asked, "Has he come yet?" the people said they did not know.

Another god: In one of the writings of Buddhism, Pat found a description of this god: "On his way to pilgrimage, the Lord Buddha saw a pagan priest who came to ask him how to be saved from sins and inherit the kingdom of heaven. The Lord Buddha said to him, 'Everyone has sinned greatly, even myself, though I gave up all my possessions and became a priest and have done many good deeds, I am still not worthy to inherit the kingdom.' The pagan priest then asked again, 'Then how can we be saved?' The Buddha said to him, 'You need to do good and keep looking for another God who will come after me. His name shall be called the God of goodness and compassion.'

"The pagan priest again asked the Lord Buddha, 'Could you give some characteristics of the God who will come to save the world?' The Lord Buddha said to him, 'Look on the palms of his hands and feet; you will see the marks of a pinion-rack, and also there are scars at his side and on his forehead. Surely he is the one who will lead you to heaven; you should wait for this God. He is the only real and true God.' "

The Houmphans were able to say, "Yes, this God has come in the Messiah Jesus, who died on a cross, whose hands and feet have nail prints, who wore a crown of thorns and whose side was pierced." Many of the Isaane have come to put their trust in Christ and experienced the joy and peace of salvation. Millions of Isaane still wait to hear this good news.

Always present: Christ has not changed. The value of his death has not changed. People have not changed. The problems have not changed. The attraction of the Lord Jesus Christ is always present, and he will draw people now.

For us as a church in mission, learn from this passage that we must by our life and witness in word and deed draw people to Jesus. Love them for Christ's sake and draw them through his love and by gentle invitations. It is Christ who is the only and greatest attraction. He is the one who draws, Christ lifted up from the earth, Christ crucified, Christ who died for sinners, Christ whose shed blood and broken body bring healing and hope to the world.

Sheldon Sawatzky is East Asia program administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions and a member of First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan. This article is adapted from a sermon he preached there.

Quality Children's Books!

The Christmas Sheep and Other Stories

by Avril Rowlands; illustrated by Rosslyn Moran

Four stories comprise this book about the first Christmas. Each is about animals who may have witnessed the event—an ill-tempered, mouthy donkey; a bashful sheep, pushed to the edge of her flock by others; a blathering and imperial ox who's fed up with the commotion in his stable; and a caravan of camels who try not to get lost.

These are animals of robust character, who by accident are party to the birth of the Christ child. Neither they nor their surroundings are sweet.

"Good for reading aloud." — **Booklist**

"Handsomely composed, vibrantly colored, full- and partial-page illustrations punctuate the stories with amusing details. Worthwhile." — **School Library Journal**

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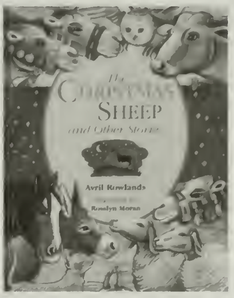

I Wish Tonight
Lois Rock + Anne Wilson

I Wish Tonight

by Lois Rock; illustrated by Anne Wilson

A little boy pulls the covers up under his chin—and at that, trees grow up at the foot of his bed, his quilt becomes a sail, and a soaring dream of a book sweeps forward.

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"Filled with diversity and optimism, this makes a soothing bedtime story." — **School Library Journal**

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by Mary Joslin; illustrated by Alison Jay

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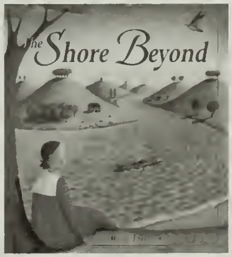

The Underbed

The Underbed

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illustrated by Sibyl Graber Gerig

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P. Buckley Moss, Artist; Story by Merle Good

The third picture book in a very popular series (more than 100,000 copies in print!) *"Braving the taunts of his sister, Reuben helps sew the quilt his family is making to sell at an auction. When the quilt is stolen, the family's act of forgiveness and generosity brings it back."* — **Publishers Weekly**

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Eastern District disciplines Germantown

Action is believed to be first against a GC congregation

PHILADELPHIA—The first Mennonite congregation on this continent has become the first General Conference Mennonite Church congregation to be demoted in membership status.

At Eastern District Conference's fall assembly Nov. 3, 88 percent of conference delegates voted to place Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, temporarily "under discipline" because of the congregation's ordination of a gay man five weeks earlier. The action further calls for resolution of Germantown's membership by the conference's spring assembly in May 2002. That could mean the loss of membership in Eastern District and thus in Mennonite Church USA, which will succeed the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church on Feb. 1, 2002.

Germantown, a longtime member of the Supportive Congregations Network, had been a dual-conference congregation until 1997, when it was expelled by Franconia Conference.

While Mennonite Church history is peppered with discipline of congregations, including nine over issues of homosexuality, it is believed that no General Conference Mennonite Church area conference had previously taken such an action on a congregation's membership for any reason. In 1995, Northern District Conference pulled its financial support of St. Paul (Minn.)Mennonite Fellowship, a church plant, because of its position on homosexuality but did not address the issue of membership.

To be determined is a definition of "under discipline," since the Eastern District bylaws include no such measure. "All we have in there is how churches can get into Eastern District, not how they leave," says conference president David Hersh.

Despite the absence of provisions for discipline, he says, it was important for the conference to express its opposition to the ordination. "We were taking a stand," Hersh says. "We felt it very important it be a public stand. ... If we didn't do something, it would look like we weren't concerned."

Germantown on Sept. 30 conducted an ordination ceremony for David Weaver, a homosexual and a pastoral counselor with both social work and seminary degrees. "We felt it would be appropriate for him to have the correct credentials as he works with the public," says Germantown pastor Richard Lichty.

According to denominational polity, ministerial credentials are granted by area conferences. But Germantown did not go through the conference for Weaver's ordination. "It's not surprising that the Spirit has led us into these kinds of things," says Lichty, who has had his Eastern District credentials placed on probation. "We wish we didn't have to act outside official channels, but they are not available.

"That we are at tension with some current polity is noted."

Hersh says Eastern District did not know of Germantown's plans until about six weeks before the scheduled ordination. "We were blindsided by it," he says. "I wish someone would have come to us when this was in the talking stage and talked this thing out."

The conference responded with a letter calling the ordination in opposition to denominational statements on sexuality and asking Germantown to voluntarily withdraw its membership. The congregation by unanimous vote subsequently rejected the request.

Hersh says he intends to pursue further dialogue with the congregation in hopes of finding an acceptable resolution to the situation. "I don't know if we're capable of changing their minds, but I'm really going to give it a yeoman's effort," he says.

If those efforts fail, Eastern District could expel Germantown from the conference, which would also mean expulsion from Mennonite Church USA. After Feb. 1, 2002, congregations can hold denominational membership only by being members of an area conference.

"If they choose to do that, ... I guess they'll have to do that," Lichty says. "It makes us very sad, gives us pain again.

"Our desire is to remain in fellowship with the denomination. We need the Mennonite church. We're not about to go out and create our own heritage. ... We're going to have to be activist in finding fellowship wherever we can within Mennonite circles."

The North American Mennonite circle originates with Germantown, established in 1690 as the first Mennonite congregation outside Europe. In 1725, Germantown hosted the first Mennonite conference session in America.

—*Rich Preheim*

Roster of charter members up to 12

With a 75 percent delegate vote, Allegheney Conference on Nov. 3 joined 11 other Mennonite Church area conferences as Mennonite Church USA charter members when the new denomination begins on Feb. 1, 2002.

With four conferences opting for provisional membership and one choosing not to join, only two conferences are left to decide their future with Mennonite Church USA: Virginia is scheduled to take action in January 2002, while North Central will probably be a provisional member, although no decision has been made yet, says moderator Galen Kauffman.

Charter members are Allegheny, Atlantic Coast, Central Plains, Franconia, Gulf States, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan, Ohio, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Southeast. Provisional members are Franklin, Lancaster, New York and South Central. Puerto Rico has decided not to be part of Mennonite Church USA.

Mary E. Klassen

Douglas Hostetler Kaufman, pastor of Benton Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., and his sons, Isaiah, 5, and Jacob, 2, help plant crocus bulbs Nov. 6 on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. The 5,000 bulbs—representing lives lost in the United States in the Sept. 11 attacks and lives lost in Afghanistan due to U.S. bombing—replace stakes that had been planted in the shape of a cross on Sept. 25. The hope is a cross of crocuses will bloom next spring. "Christians always move from the suffering and agony of the crucifixion to the hope of resurrection," said AMBS president Nelson Kraybill.

In Afghanistan and New York, relief agencies continue their responses after Sept. 11 attacks

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) have continued their responses to tragedies of the Sept. 11 attacks, although in locations half a world away.

In New York City, 20 congregations recently each received a $1,500 check, the first payments from MDS's Project Restoring Hope. The funds will go for projects such as grief workshops, counseling, bilingual seminars on healing and reconciliation, and other peace witness activities and neighborhood outreach.

First Mennonite Church, a Hispanic congregation in Brooklyn, will renovate its fellowship hall to provide space for computer training and English classes.

"Right after this tragedy, everyone was talking about helping everyone else and offering all kinds of things," says pastor Ray Pacheco. "But people are feeling frustrated. They're hitting up against a lot of red tape. ... But with MDS, there's a sense of caring and sense of partnership, a sense of them really wanting to get involved."

Says MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker, "We felt it was important to get some kind of support to the churches as soon as possible. We wanted to show them that people outside the city are supporting them."

MDS has received more than $250,000 for Project Restoring Hope, which was created to support responses following the Sept. 11 attacks. MDS has budgeted $150,000 for the first year, with the possibility of using the rest of the funds to extend the project for up to three years. MDS is no longer soliciting money, but contributions can still be made through Dec. 31.

In addition to individual congregational projects, the New York congregations may also create traveling singing and drama troupes to share accounts of survival and faith.

"They are taking a huge negative and turning it into a positive by telling the story of peace and reconciliation," Smucker says.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan, MCC recently sent three volunteers to visit refugee camps. Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church raised half the funds to send member Doug Hostetter to Afghanistan for three weeks. MCC covered the rest of the costs. The congregation also contributed $5,000 in aid for displaced Afghan families.

Hostetter, a former MCC worker and past director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, left Oct. 22 to join workers with Help the Afghan Children, a U.S.-based aid organization, in distributing supplies, toward which MCC contributed $10,000.

On Nov. 3, Wallace and Evelyn Shellenberger, MCC workers in Iran, visited a refugee camp organized by the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in a section of western Afghanistan controlled at the time by the Taliban.

The IRCS will distribute 40,000 MCC comforters and blankets along with 5,000 metric tons of lentils purchased by MCC.—*Mennonite Weekly Review and MCC News Service*

Christmas project to focus on Sept. 11

Like nearly every other aspect of American life, this year's annual Christmas Sharing Fund reflects the events of Sept. 11 in New York and Washington.

Contributions to the fund will go to New York City-area Mennonite congregations to support their ministries of healing and service and will also provide assistance to Afghan refugees through Mennonite Central Committee.

"Sept. 11 has changed our perception of the world," says Ron Byler, associate executive secretary for Mennonite Church USA. "As evil and devastation erupted among us, our commitments to peace and reconciliation are severely tested."

Past projects of Christmas Sharing Fund offerings include the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia, United Native Ministries in the United States, translation of the Jubilee Sunday school curriculum into Spanish and earthquake relief in Turkey.

For more information, contact Byler at the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board office, 421 S. Second St., Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516, phone 219-294-7131, email <rbyler@juno.com>. —*Mennonite Church USA News Service*

Bethel picks lawyer as its next president

Epp

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—In a departure from the traditional fields of academia, Bethel College has turned to a lawyer for leadership in the trials of being a small, church-affiliated, liberal arts institution of higher education.

E. LaVerne Epp of Lawrence, Kan., a 1972 Bethel graduate, received unanimous board approval Nov. 10 as the North Newton school's 12th president. He will begin Aug. 1, 2002, succeeding Douglas Penner, who has served since 1995 and will step down June 30, 2002.

A native of Henderson, Neb., Epp earned his law degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln in 1976. After graduation he became a partner in a Newton, Kan., law firm. In 1986, he moved to Lawrence to become secretary and general counsel for Retirement Management Co. and has served as president since 1993. The company manages 10 senior living facilities in six states and employs 1,000 people.

Epp will join Joseph L. Lapp of Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., as the only lawyers leading Mennonite colleges.

Search committee chair Dee Gaeddert said the board was looking for skills beyond traditional academia, such as management. "We need new ideas, and we believe that LaVerne ... demonstrated the capacity and the vision that we were looking for," she said.

One of those new ideas Epp wants to explore is "learning centers," such as continuing education classes, mentoring programs and seminars in management and conflict transformation.

"We [at Retirement Management Co.] were always looking for training opportunities for our senior management," Epp said. "It would be great for Bethel to offer a center for senior management."

He said such programs would be consistent with Bethel's educational philosophy. "Learning is for life, because that's what liberal [arts] education is," Epp said.

That also fits with his vision for expanding the community served and affected by Bethel. Epp said he does not want to de-emphasize the school's Mennonite characteristics. But community members need to allow themselves to be influenced by the diversity that can be incorporated into campus life. "Our concept of learning from others is as important as teaching people," Epp said.

Epp, who is vice chair of the Bethel board, was chair of the search committee when it began work a year ago. "We saw the leading LaVerne was providing to our group," Gaeddert said.

After some coaxing from the committee, Epp agreed to be considered as a presidential candidate and resigned from the committee in May.—*Rich Preheim*

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Bethel College

Bluffton lunch event provides food for thought as campus explores international issues, peace

Cory Schoenherr, a Bluffton (Ohio) College junior from Coldwater, Ohio, serves a helping of a noodle dish to Akuch Riak, a Bluffton sophomore and Sudanese native, during a Friday noon lunch to explore international awareness and peace. The weekly gatherings have drawn 40 to 80 students, faculty and staff members.

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Friday is noodle day at Bluffton College. Starting this fall, the college's Lion and Lamb Peace Arts Center and history department are teaming up once a week to serve noodle dishes from somewhere in the world along with a presentation promoting international awareness and peace.

"We're building a culture of internationalism on campus," says Dan Wessner, assistant professor of history and international studies. He and Lion and the Lamb director Elizabeth Holdeman developed the idea from a similar event held on the Stanford University campus in Palo Alto, Calif.

The goal is an informal, well-attended venue for international students to speak and for those interested in studying or working abroad to inquire, Wessner says. So far the plan seems to be working. Forty to 80 students, faculty and staff gather each Friday for food and conversation. At one of the initial lunches, junior Akuch Riak and freshman Angong Acuil spoke about the civil unrest and war in their homeland of Sudan.

"I always look forward to going to the lunches and feel the warmth and friendliness of the faculty and students there," Riak says. "People were very willing to listen to what I had to share, and I feel that some good will come from it. Most people just don't hear about what is really going on in the Sudan."

Other noodle lunch programs have included student speakers; announcements about study, work and service opportunities abroad; concerns about the advent of war; and previews of the foreign films that are shown on alternating Friday evenings in the peace arts center. Menus have included noodle dishes from Korea, Japan, Thailand, Greece and the United States.

"Our vision is to create a place where a wide variety of students, staff, faculty and Bluffton neighbors can enjoy coming together in the environment of the peace arts center with others interested in peace," Wessner says.

The free lunches are funded through a grant from the Bluffton College Women's Council. The noodles are made in a noodle cooker donated by the Japanese community in Bluffton.—*Lois J. Wetherill*

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Hurricanes spawn MCC assistance

AKRON, Pa.—Damage inflicted by recent hurricanes in Central America has Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) supporting reconstruction work in Belize and assessing relief efforts in Honduras and Nicaragua.

Hurricane Iris struck southern Belize on Oct. 8, leaving 13,000 people homeless and severely damaging banana crops. MCC is funding a $30,000 reconstruction project proposed by the Belize Evangelical Mennonite Churches. Members plan to rebuild 11 houses and repair 15 roofs in four communities.

Central America was suffering from a severe drought before Hurricane Michelle struck Honduras and Nicaragua in early November. While hurricane-related rains may ensure a good harvest next spring, MCC will continue to supply affected farmers with food until then.—*MCC News Service*

First MC woman to earn a doctorate dies at 90

GRANTSVILLE, Md.—Alta Schrock, the first Mennonite Church woman to earn a doctorate and who later established a successful cultural center, died Nov. 7 after a brief hospitalization. She was 90.

Schrock, a native of Grantsville, received a doctorate in biology from the University of Pittsburgh and went on to teach at several schools, including Bluffton (Ohio) College, Goshen (Ind.) College and most recently Frostburg (Md.) State, from which she retired in 1977 after 17 years there.

During World War II, Schrock served with Civilian Public Service and assisted immigrating Mennonite refugees after the war.

In 1958, Schrock started Penn Alps in Grantsville to showcase local artisans. Today Penn Alps also includes a restaurant, music concerts and festivals.

The funeral was held Nov. 10 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church, where she was a lifelong member.

Goshen College recognizes two for service

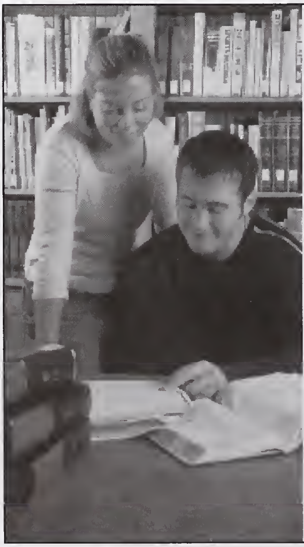
GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College seniors Heidi Collins and Jennifer Gingerich were honored Nov. 9 with the college's second annual Barnabas Servant Leadership Award. Each student received $500 plus $250 to be directed to a charitable organization of their choice.

Collins, from Goshen, is active in Big Brothers/Big Sisters. She will donate her $250 to the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters program.

Gingerich, from Hubbard, Ore., has served with Mennonite Disabilities Committee, at a clinic for alcoholics in Germany and at Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, Ore., and more. She donated her entire $750 to the camp.

this date in Mennonite history

Nov. 20, 1987—Iowa-Nebraska Conference puts Ames (Iowa) Mennonite Church out of membership, the first congregation to be so disciplined because of its position on homosexuality.



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Workers

Bontrager, Stephan, Lakewood, Colo., has begun a one-year Mennonite Urban Corps (MennoCorps) assignment with WYEP-FM independent radio in Pittsburgh.

Eash, James, Newton, Kan., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment at the Kelly-Strayhorn Community Performing Arts Center in Pittsburgh.

Haarer, Randy, will conclude in February a pastorate at Good Shepherd Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Horst, Anne, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and Just Harvest, Pittsburgh.

Hurst, Nick, Brownstown, Pa., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment in urban organic farming in Pittsburgh.

King, Cindy, Hickory, N.C., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment working with peace, justice and international human rights issues in Pittsburgh.

King, Sandy, Hickory, N.C., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

Lehman, Angie, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment with Loney Metal Works and the Methodist Union of Social Agencies, Pittsburgh.

Lehman, Todd, was installed Oct. 21 as joint youth pastor at First Mennonite Church and Trinity Mennonite Church, both in Hillsboro, Kan.

Sisco, Richard, was installed in October as pastor of Koinonia Mennonite Church, Chandler, Ariz.

Stauffer, Neil, Akron, Pa., has begun a one-year MennoCorps assignment in urban organic farming in Pittsburgh.

Thacker, John David, was installed Oct. 14 as pastor at Prince of Peace Mennonite Church, Anchorage, Alaska.

Births

Brubaker, Graham Montgomery, Oct. 6, to Jodie and Randy Brubaker, Lancaster, Pa.

Brubaker, Nathan Beau, Sept. 10, to Rebecca and Tony Brubaker, Lancaster, Pa.

Finley, Kristen Ann, Oct. 23, to Kevin and Heather Falke Finley, Burrton, Kan.

Hausknecht, Anya Rose, Oct. 26, to Ben and Yolanda Steiner Hausknecht, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hess, Carrie Mae, Oct. 9, to Gene and Susan Hess, Lancaster, Pa.

Jordan, Uriah Kandice, July 19, to Keith and Melvia Jordan, Markham, Ill.

Lepp, Brookelynn Michelle, Oct. 6, to Darel and Victoria Lepp, Steinbach, Man.

Mast, Elias Eby, Oct. 19, to Cindy Eby and Randy Mast, Nairobi, Kenya.

McMillon, Horace Alexander, Sept. 2, to Horace and Monique Cross McMillon, Chicago.

Schroeder, Diego Oliver, Oct. 16, to Irene and Orlando Schroeder, Steinbach, Man.

Simpson, Lillian Madison, Oct. 13, to James Simpson and Melissa Wade, Royersford, Pa.

Marriages

Allebach/Vass: Sherri Allebach, Souderton, Pa., and Emmil Vass, Hatfield, Pa., Oct. 20 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Borntrager/Woodring: Emily Borntrager, Goshen, Ind., and Max Woodring, Millersburg, Ind., Oct. 20 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

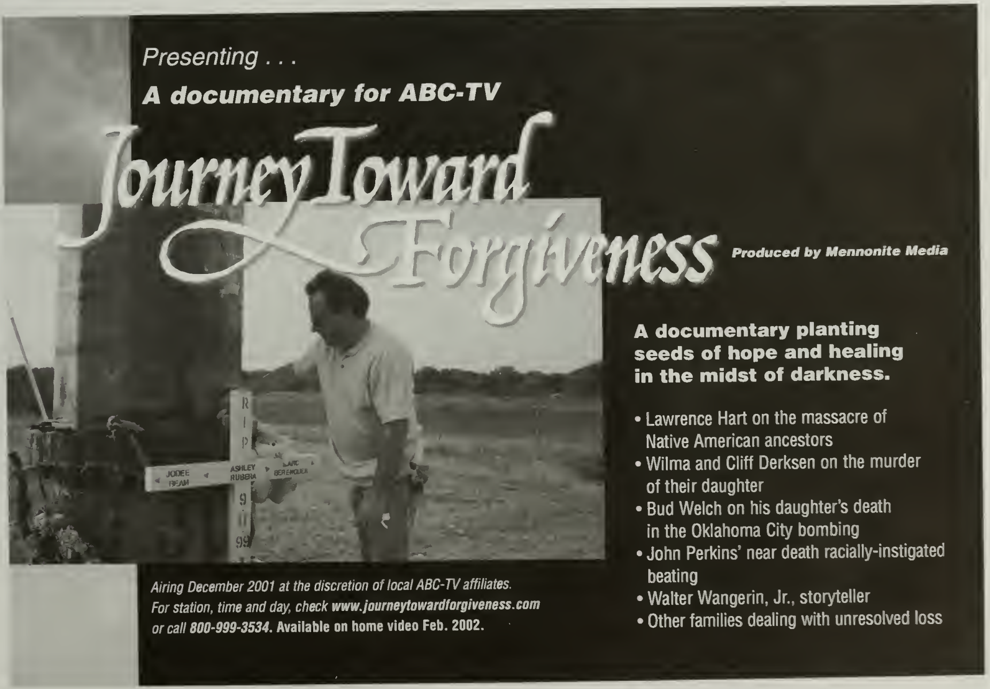
Ebersole/Faulkner: Sheldon Ebersole, Sterling, Ill., and Julie Faulkner, Milledgeville, Ill., Sept. 8 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Histand/Martin: Josephine Histand, Blooming Glen, Pa., and Conrad A. Martin, Chambersburg, Pa., Oct. 27 at Blooming Glen Mennonite Church.

McSorley/Riegsecker: Erika McSorley, Bristol, Ind., and Jason Riegsecker, Middlebury, Ind., Oct. 20 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Moon/Morrow: Megan Moon, Glen Burnie, Md., and Ben Morrow, Blue Bell, Pa., Sept. 8 at Harleysville, Pa.

Smith/Wiseman: Rebekah Smith, Stuarts Draft, Va., and Clay Wiseman, Greenville, Va., Sept. 15 at Greenville.



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Deaths

Bontrager, Beulah Hostetler, 91, Hesston, Kan., died Nov. 1. Spouse: William (Bill) Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Oliver and Nettie Cooprider Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children Glenda Monteith, Miriam Ensz, Howard; nine grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; two stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 4 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Breneman, Naomi Shenk, 82, Lancaster, Pa., died Sept. 17. Spouse: Martin W. Breneman (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Ella Erb Shenk (deceased). Survivors: children David, Rhoda, Jerry, Rachel, Roseanne Stewart; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Habecker Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Brydge, Vance R., 85, Lyndhurst, Va., died Oct. 2. Spouse: Ila Rea Brydge (deceased). Parents: Edward and Isabelle Brydge (deceased). Survivors: children Leland, Carlton, Bud, Sandy Burkholder; eight grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Lynside Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst.

Garges, Mildred K., 67, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 20. Parents: Vincent and Sally Kulp Garges (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 25 at Souderton, Pa.

Gingrich, Cecil, 98, Cambridge, Ont., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Mary Hunsperger Gingrich (deceased). Parents: Enoch and Rebecca Gingrich (deceased). Survivors: children Jeanne Weber, Doris Gascho; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Fairview Mennonite Home, Cambridge.

Hamilton, Eldon, 86, Harrisonburg, Va., died Oct. 23. Spouse: Jessie Yoder Hamilton. Other survivors: children James, David, Elsie Bowman, Alice Brubaker; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Horst, Noah R., 95, St. Jacobs, Ont., died Oct. 22. Spouse: Barbara Horst Horst. Parents: John and Nancy Reist Horst (deceased). Other survivors: children Janet Shorten, Barbara, Lois; one grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 25 at St. Jacobs Mennonite Church.

Kauffmann, Alma Litwiller, 100, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 21. Spouse: John Kauffmann (deceased). Parents: Amos and Barbara Naffziger Litwiller (deceased). Survivors: children Miriam, Warren, Floyd, Ivan, Merle, Norman; 15 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Memorial service: Oct. 23 at Goshen. Funeral: Oct. 26 at Hopedale (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Kaufman, Irene Stucky, 85, McPherson, Kan., died Oct. 19 of cancer. Spouse: Homer Kaufman (deceased). Parents: Val and Ida Schrag Stucky (deceased). Survivors: children Jackie Borth, Dixie, Carol, Bonnie Wells; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandson. Funeral: Oct. 27 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Lapp, James, 89, Sterling, Ill., died Oct. 15. Spouse: Marian Trimble Lapp. Parents: Daniel and Ida Good Lapp (deceased). Other survivors: children Vonda James, Nancy Humphrey, Dale; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 20 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Stauffer, Pauline Mae Beck, 71, Alma, Kan., died Oct. 25. Spouse: Milton Stauffer. Parents: Alma and John Beck (deceased), stepmother Sylvia Beck. Other survivors: children Beverly Augsburger, Thomas, Kay Mills, Paula Glass; seven grandchildren. Memorial services: Oct. 28 at Zeandale Community Church, Alma, and Nov. 11 at Gilead Mennonite Church, Mount Gilead, Ohio.

Stiner, Franklin Walter, 73, York, Pa., died Oct. 23 of pulmonary edema. Spouse: (1st) Peggy McCurdy Stiner (deceased), (2nd) Nancy Hammill Stiner (deceased). Parents: Walter and Esther Major Stiner (deceased). Survivors: son Mark; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 27 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.

Swartzendruber, Edna Veda Rich, 78, Kalona, Iowa, died Oct. 24 in a car accident. Spouse: Stanley Swartzendruber. Parents: Joseph and Anna Graber Rich (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Thelma Goszleth, June Taylor, Dave, Tony, Bernie, Becky Hochstedler, Anne Ricci; 23 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 27 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Thomas, Harold E., 90, Hollsopple, Pa., died Oct. 3 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Anna Saylor Thomas. Parents: Edward and Polly Blough Thomas (deceased). Other survivors: children Harold, Cynthia Lehman; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Stahl Mennonite Church, Johnstown, Pa.

Yoder, Beulah E., 94, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 21. Spouse: Glen E. Yoder (deceased). Parents: Henry and Mary Wingard Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children James, David, Terry; eight grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 23 at Greencroft, Goshen.

Yoder, Glenn Raymond, 87, Albany, Ore., died Oct. 14. Spouse: Amie Gerig Yoder (deceased). Parents: Emery and Vertie Gingerich Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Doug, Don, Deanne Gingerich; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at Albany Mennonite Church.

Zook, Lena E., 78, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 14. Parents: Emma and Isaac Zook (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 19 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

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25 Conferences affirm new denomination

a new magazine for a new church

TheMennonite

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classifieds

- **Ashton Mennonite Church**, Sarasota, Fla., is seeking a half-time ***youth pastor***. Interested people may contact Cheryl Clunk at 941-924-8084, or send email to <ashton.church@verizon.net>.

- **Sarasota Christian School**, Sarasota, Fla., has a job opening for an ***athletic director***.

  Interested people should email Barbara Miller at <bmiller@sarasotachristian.org> or call 941-371-6481.

- **Men's retreat** at ***Spruce Lake Retreat*** Jan. 17-18, 2002 (Pocono Mts. of northeastern Pa.). "Sharing Your Faith in the New Millennium" is the theme of evangelist and Staley lecturer Dan Owens. Pastor's discounted package only $25. Standard package is $99/person. Discount for groups of 20 or more.

  Register yourself or your men's group by calling 800-822-7505.

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  For further information, contact Faith and Life Communications, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1; email <flc@confmenn.mb.ca>; 204-885-2565 ext. 260; fax 204-832-7804.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** urgently needs ***country representatives*** for the Philippines, former Soviet Union, Guatemala and D.R. of Congo. These 4- to 5-year volunteer assignments require applicants with college degrees, overseas experience, language skills, communication, organizational and administration skills, strong Christian faith and a respect for a wide variety of people.

  Contact Charmayne Denlinger Brubaker, Human Resources, 717-859-1151 or <cdb@mcc.org> for a job description and more information.

- **Dock Village**, a subsidized family housing facility and affiliate of Dock Wood Community, an Anabaptist retirement community, is seeking a couple to function as ***community support staff***. This couple will join a multidisciplinary team to act as positive role models while participating in being a "good neighbor." Planning community activities, field trips and developing mentoring relationships are all part of this position. The position requires education in counseling, social work, psychology or youth ministry. On-campus housing is an option.

  Interested candidates should send resume to the HR Dept., 275 Dock Dr., Lansdale, PA 19446, or fax to 215-362-2682. www.dockwoods.com

- **Goshen College's** communication department seeks a full-time faculty member to ***direct the basic course in oral communication*** and to teach communication theory and interpersonal communication courses, as well as additional courses as needed in areas such as cross-cultural communication, multimedia or theater. Ph.D. in communication or speech (or closely related area) preferred, A.B.D. or master's degree considered. Successful collegiate teaching experience and knowledge of and facility with appropriate instructional technologies are strongly preferred. Interviews will begin after Jan. 15, 2002, and continue until the position is filled. Faculty responsibilities begin Aug. 15, 2002.

  To apply, send letter of application, resume and three letters of reference to Anita Stalter, Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu> We encourage applications through the Goshen College Web site at <www.goshen.edu>. Women and members of minorities are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

- **Goshen College** is seeking candidates for two new half-time positions with possibility of combining them for qualified person:

Associate campus pastor: Provides leadership to encourage young adults toward church vocations. Identify students, find ministry opportunities, work with churches. M.Div. or master's degree in related field required. Fluency in English and Spanish preferred.

Youth ministry director: Develop and administer youth ministry initiative of the Bible, religion and philosophy department. Teach two classes, help recruit and advise students, arrange internships, develop media information and present at conferences. M.Div. or master's in related field required with 5 years of youth ministry experience years required with interest in additional graduate studies. Seeking energetic, self-motivated person to build new program.

Both positions require commitment to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

To apply for either or both positions, please find listings on the employment page of <www.goshen.edu>. Contact Amy Hartman, 219-535-7707, email <amymh@goshen.edu> with questions. Indicate interest in one or both positions on personnel information form. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer; women and minority people are encouraged to apply.

Classified ads in *The Mennonite* produce results! Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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Hugh Alan Smith

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Dora and Matthew have a joyful reunion in Minnesota for a week, but he has to return to California. The letters fly between them as Dora is a *Maad* (hired girl) for a lively, large family in Minnesota. Then come spring courting and the fall wedding. Lilacs, love, and faith keep Dora going. Book 2 in the Dora's Diary Series by Carrie Bender.
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The year is 1874, and Paul Wipf is enchanted by dreams of America. But when lightning strikes, killing his parents, his dreams are shattered and buried in the ashes of sadness and guilt.

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by Rich Preheim

Marked man

Passing the plate is a conventional part of church life. But this isn't the type of collection a man of the cloth wants to hear about.

Wealthy landowners in northern Honduras have raised $32,000 for the assassination of Peter Marchetti, a U.S. priest who has supported landless peasants and accused the country's wealthiest man of murder, says *National Catholic Reporter.*

Land reform has long been a volatile issue in Honduras. In May 2000, a group of 700 landless families, many of whom had lost their homes to Hurricane Mitch in 1998, overran a former military base constructed by the United States. The peasants claim the property should be given to them, and the government's agrarian reform ministry agrees. But a group of cattle ranchers, who purchased the land 10 years ago at a fraction of its real value, disagrees. Tensions between the group in July erupted into gunfire, which killed one rancher.

Marchetti, who has provided moral and material support to the peasants, says he is being made a scapegoat. "Have I spent a lot of time in this personally? No," he says. "Do I make the decisions? No. Am I a symbol in a very religious culture that it might be just and godly to distribute resources to the poor? Yes."

He has also accused Miguel Facusse, the wealthiest man in the country, of having a political activist killed. Judicial authorities reportedly have sufficient evidence to indict Facusse but have been stymied by political meddling.

A diocesan social worker says he knows of "at least three killers" who have targeted Marchetti. But his activism has given him a high profile in Honduras, which has probably helped save his life. Said an unnamed colleague, "Killing Peter would draw disastrous attention to the corruption and inequalities that have long governed [the region]."

The sporting life, I

Talk about your modern-day circuit riders. After three years of demolition derbies, this season was the first for stock-car competition for Spencerville-Roebuck (Ont.) Presbyterian Church. And it looks like no one wants to put the brakes on the idea.

The church's car, a 1981 Chevrolet Monte Carlo, was fitted for racing through the donations of church members and community folks, sponsored mostly by businesses of longtime church members and driven and maintained by church newcomers.

"It's like a microcosm of the church, with the new driving the old," member and racing organizer Joe Martelle tells *The Observer,* the denominational magazine. "It's good because when new people come to church, it's sometimes hard for them to fit in with longtime members."

The car, which consistently logged fifth- and sixth-place finishes at a nearby speedway, is a winner off the track. At a recent church event, it served as a repository for food-bank donations. It's also not uncommon to find the car parked in front of the church. Church members have come to take it for granted, but visitors are often surprised.

"It's quite a spectacle to see a dirt-track stock car in front of the church," Martelle says.

The sporting life, II

It is a very odd couple: quiet Quakers and the epithet-inducing game of golf. Yet in the Philadelphia area, the two go together like Tiger Woods and endorsements. For example, according to *Quaker Life,* Samuel Fox, who had been befriended by Scottish golf legend Old Tom Morris, in 1887 established Foxburg Country Club, the oldest continuously operating golf course in the United States and home of the American Golf Hall of Fame. In 1901, three men sharing a fondness for golf and Quaker beliefs formed the Friends Golf Union, the first U.S. golfing society.

This heritage was celebrated Sept. 30-Oct. 1 with the Philadelphia Golf Heritage Festival at Waynesborough Country Club in Haverford. The event was a fund-raiser for Friends Hospital, established in 1813 as the first private psychiatric hospital in this country.

No place for prayer

In cyberspace, no one can hear you pray. At least Conservative Jews aren't supposed to pray that way, says a group of rabbis and scholars.

The Conservative branch's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards has ruled that a "minyan," or 10-member prayer group, cannot be constituted or held in cyberspace, reports *The Christian Century.* The committee made its decision to address whether Jews in distant communities or homebound or elderly adults could participate in remote prayer services. The committee said that a minyan—considered a necessary quorum before communal prayers can be offered—must include 10 Jewish adults in physical proximity.

Tidbits

- **Attendance at religious services increased 6 percent the weekend after the Sept. 11 attacks. *—Christianity Today***
- **The smallest denomination in the World Council of Churches is Ekalesia Niue, on the island of Niue, northwest of New Zealand, with 1,500 members in 13 parishes.*—WCC News***
- **Churches in the United States and Western Europe lose 7,600 members a day. *—Light and Life***
- **Church Mutual Insurance Co., the country's largest insurer of church buildings, now offers "catastrophic violence response coverage" for events such as hostage-takings, shootings and bombings.*—The Lutheran***
- **Through 2000, 4.1 million people had seen the *Jesus* video since 1979.*—Mission Frontiers***

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Gordon Houser

In eschatological diapers

In this life, all symphonies remain unfinished.
—Karl Rahner

We risk "letting restlessness become a cancer in our lives" if we fail to understand 20th-century Catholic theologian Karl Rahner's words, writes Ronald Rolheiser in *Against an Infinite Horizon: The Finger of God in Our Everyday Lives* (Crossroad, 2001).

Spiritual maturity comes as we embrace life with gratitude and see God's love in its midst. The apostle Paul puts it this way: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

I can think of no more challenging words to our dissatisfied culture. If we truly gave thanks in all circumstances, if we were content with what we have, our consumer culture would fall apart, be turned upside down.

Paul is an example of such spiritual maturity. He writes, "I have learned to be content with whatever I have" (Philippians 4:11b). Who of us can make such a statement? But notice that he has *learned* to be content. It's not automatic. We, too, can learn.

Spiritual maturity comes as we embrace life with gratitude and see God's love in its midst.

A way to begin is to practice what Bill Hallsted suggests in our cover story (page 4): "Join our family in simply trusting God to supply anything and everything you need without your asking, and restrict your prayers for the whole of Thanksgiving week to only praise and thanks. It's a wonderful experience."

That's a modest beginning but a beginning nevertheless. Giving thanks can be merely a formal prayer we offer before a meal or after we escape an unpleasant circumstance. What if we made it a continual practice?

This means offering thanks to God each day for whatever that day brings. Why is this so difficult? Why are we so dissatisfied with our daily life? I suspect at root we are dissatisfied with ourselves.

Augustine said, "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in [God]." We are created infinite beings, crafted in the image of God, made to be in union with God. Yet we live in a finite world. We encounter the wounds this world offers, the shortcomings of others as well as of ourselves. Our symphony remains unfinished.

Part of finding rest or contentment is realizing that we will only find wholeness in God. The longing within us cannot be satisfied in our possessions, our accomplishments or even our relationships.

Recognizing and accepting that longing will help us be at peace with ourselves and transmit peace to others. Giving thanks is one way to help us accept all that we are.

Giving thanks in all circumstances does not mean that we become complacent, that we ignore injustice. It means that in addressing problems we are not simply acting out our own discontentment.

Such a message may sound harsh to those who are suffering. My greatest difficulty in giving thanks comes when I am in pain or in circumstances I do not like. Sometimes others can help.

Last summer, when my car broke down 10 hours from home, I wanted my circumstances to change—right now! Since I had been trying to practice giving thanks at all times, I tried it then, but it was hard. I certainly didn't feel thankful.

Then I called Jeanne, my wife, and told her how I felt. She reminded me that I was not hurt, that it could have been much worse. Her voice calmed me down, made it easier to give thanks and experience some peace.

We need to help each other practice this difficult discipline. We can start during this time of Thanksgiving, but let's carry it forward and apply it in all our days.

It helps to see our lives from God's eschatalogical (end of the ages) perspective. Rolheiser writes: "In real life, in God's eyes, we are all still in eschatological diapers, irrespective of age! We are children, babies really, crying over broken toys." As we grow in maturity, we see our lives against that larger horizon.

Our symphonies may remain unfinished, but we can still create music. Giving thanks can help make it a beautiful song.—*gh*

No issue next week: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Dec. 4.

the Mennonite

December 4, 2001

the hard work of healing

page 4

7 December walk

11 In-tent on proclaiming the whole gospel

13 Economic slump hits endowments

24 A truckload of hope

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The color of insecurity

I am grateful for Everett Thomas' thoughtful editorial on the reality of feeling safe in the United States after the tragedy of Sept. 11 ("Learning From Those Who Know Suffering," Nov. 6). It must be acknowledged that many people of color have not felt safe and do not feel safe in this country. A terrible part of our American legacy is that not so long ago it was legal to segregate people according to race, and terrorist acts (bombing, lynching, etc.) against people of color were tolerated by society. These acts were often committed in places one expects to feel especially protected: home, school, church. Consequently, generations of people of color have learned it is dangerous to presume one's safety in the United States.

A striking irony behind this current era of terrorism are the constant reminders that "we will never be the same" and "everything changed on Sept. 11." A frequent criticism against people who seek to remember and understand the ramifications of U.S. slavery and Jim Crow segregation on the current state of racism is that we dwell too much on the past; rather, we ought to just forget it and move on.—*Regina Shands Stoltzfus, Cleveland Heights, Ohio*

Thanks for "Learning From Those Who Know Suffering." I encourage people who were troubled by "An Open Letter to Alex Chadwick of National Public Radio" by Tobin Miller Shearer (Sept. 25) to reread these two articles and rethink their reactions. Know that people of color appreciated both Shearer's prayerful challenge and this editorial.

Please continue to lift up the experiences, opinions, teachings and observations of people of color. We must add Asian-Americans and Arab-Americans to the list of church leaders, as well as our brothers and sisters of color around the world, who are eager to discern with us how to live as Christians in troubled times. It's difficult, but we white Christians would do well to listen long and hard to people whose "experience [with an insecure world] is longer than eight weeks."—*Sharon K. Williams, Souderton, Pa.*

Singing sentiments

I appreciate the encouragement for Mennonites to "accept each other's preferences" as discussed in the Oct. 16 editorial ("Singing, the Prayers We Breathe"). I personally enjoy a wide range of musical styles. However, the editorial seems to echo a disturbing sentiment I often hear within the Mennonite church. Music and singing seem to be given godlike characteristics in their power to create Christian community. I would hope the "tie that binds us together" is our common commitment to Jesus Christ as expressed in our love for one another. If it is true that "the sound of the human voice is the most important element of Mennonite worship," then our worship seems dangerously close to being reduced to a choir.

One side note: Can people who do not sing well be part of such a group? Recorded music may challenge the way we do worship and may even tarnish our treasured image, but it need not threaten our corporate life.—*Randy Heacock, Warrington, Pa.*

Clarification

Thank you for reprinting my report on Paulus Widjaja's thought-provoking address to the assembly of Pacific Southwest Conference ("Watch Our Language," Oct. 30). With a foot in both American and Indonesian cultures, Widjaja offers profound insights into cross-cultural relationships in the church and deserves to be heard more widely. One small point, though: A small edit may have left the impression that Mennonite World Conference acted hastily in recognizing Indonesian churches in California without consultation. In fact, it was Pacific Southwest, which Widjaja later served as vice moderator, that extended recognition to facilitate the participation of those churches in MWC. Widjaja's words were a loving reminder to a regional conference that local actions often have global repercussions. —*Doreen Martens, Mississauga, Ont.*

More number crunching

I'm happy to see that some people took my article "Not a Level Playing Field" (Aug. 21) seriously enough to try and redo my computations (Readers Say, Oct. 23). The students are right saying that you have to read 10 flips instead of six flips. The reason for that mistake is that, in French, there is only one letter to differentiate 10 ("dix") from six ("six"). I suppose that, from one copy to another, that letter moved.

After this first computation, I thought it would be interesting to go further. I imagined a new game where everybody at the beginning would have the same wealth, say $8. Afterward, everybody has to bet $2 at each turn. If you win, you win $2.20. If you lose, you lose only your $2. This gives the idea of a slightly growing economy: You win a bit more than you lose. The problem is, what happens when you are

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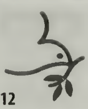
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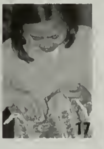
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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

bankrupt? I imagined two different solutions:

1. No welfare state at all. You have to borrow some money from some luckier player to be able to play again. You borrow $4 and have to pay back $1 each year for four years, which means that the game is harder for you. If you are bankrupt again you fall forever under the dependency of the lucky player you have not been able to pay back. He will bet for you, but you are no longer in position to earn any money for yourself. If you are able to pay back your $4, you go back to the game without restrictions.

2. Some welfare state possibilities. The state compels the luckier ones to pay taxes. With those taxes, it gives $2 to the bankrupt ones so they may bet one more time. You will have your $2 as long as you are bankrupt.

In the first one, the people in total dependency have no special interest in the game. When the richer players play for them, they have only the possibility to win $2 (instead of $2.20). In the second model the people close to bankruptcy (possessing less than $4) have no real interest in playing well. They know that they will have their $2 coming from the state if they are bankrupt. Thus they too will only win $2 when they win.

The interesting questions are: What happens after a great number of turns? How many rich players and how many poor will you have in each model? What will be the global wealth for the society as a whole? Some more mathematical questions are interesting too: What will be the standard deviation for the wealth? How can you construct some classification of people in both cases?

If you have courage enough to attempt those computations, you will find interesting results. If you lack courage, you can email me at <coninck@enpc.fr> for the results.—*Frédéric de Coninck, Paris*

Cover photo
by V. Richard Haro

Proud flesh

Lessons about the hard work of healing from treating the wounds of horses

by Terry Bowes

Then [Jesus] said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."
—John 20:27

I have a story to tell. Through it, you can put your hands in my wounds and know my pain and loss, my experience of death and grieving. But my story isn't only of wounds; it's also about how God heals, transforms and brings life out of death. It's a tale of grace and hope, an Easter story.

Every story has facts and truth. I'm a mother who, on three occasions, was informed that one of my beloved children was dead. That's the stark fact of my story. Its truth is that God heals.

My husband, Steve, and I raise horses. They are majestic animals but incredibly fragile and thin-skinned. The most frustrating injury a horse can get is a cut on its lower leg, where precious little muscle or fat lies between the skin and bone. The skin pulls apart, and it's virtually impossible to suture. On top of that, the healing process is deceptive.

Healing appears rapid. You can almost watch fresh pink tissue forming. But the new tissue keeps growing, pink, ugly and lumpy, rising far above the healthy tissue around it. "Proud flesh" is what we call this scar tissue.

Proud flesh is false healing. It becomes increasingly ugly when it's allowed to grow unchecked. At its worst it inhibits the horse's movement until the animal becomes lame.

I know proud flesh. On Jan. 9, 1967, I gave birth prematurely to a 2-pound boy. He lived less than two days. Today, medical technology probably would have saved him. Since it was clear that my baby would not survive, some believed it would be better for me not to see him or bond with him. This would help me avoid grief—or so it was thought.

Other than a fleeting glimpse in the delivery room, I never saw my firstborn son. I never touched or held him. But I heard him cry—a weak, fragile wail. I can still hear him today.

"You're young. You'll have more babies," we were told by people trying to be helpful. Steve and I did have more babies and put our firstborn's death behind us. But it was false healing—proud flesh. I carried a deep, nameless hurt.

Once proud flesh develops, the only hope is to surgically slice it off and begin the healing process again. Occasionally you have to repeat the process several times. I certainly did.

On Feb. 16, 1988, our second child, our first daughter, Stephanie, took her own life. She was 20, and with her death I began learning about the true healing process. I discovered how long it takes, how painful it is and what grueling hard work it takes.

Three years and eight days later, on Feb. 24, 1991, two sheriff's deputies and an assistant from the coroner's office knocked on our door. They informed me that Missy, our fourth-born child, our second daughter—our baby—had been killed in a car accident.

How healing happens: How could I heal from all this? I go back to my metaphor.

It's a long, painful process to treat a horse with a wound on its lower leg. It requires patience and hope, courage and stamina. It takes an enormous amount of time, and it's never easy. The horse hurts and doesn't want you messing with its wound. The horse sees you as the source of its pain and will most certainly kick.

My reactions weren't much different: My God, my God! Why have you forsaken me? How could God let this happen to me? How dare you try to comfort me!

Diagnosis and confession: When a horse gets an injury on its lower leg, I first shave the hair around the wound to get a good look at it. Exposing the wound, naming it, sizing it up is difficult and scary.

We don't like to look too closely at our own woundedness for fear of what we and those around us might see. It is called confession.

We don't like to look too closely at our own woundedness for fear of what we and those around us might see. [Such looking] is called confession.

Washing and baptism: Healthy healing can only happen when the wound is clean. The best way to clean a cut on a horse is with a high-pressure stream of saline solution. I fill a syringe with the solution and squirt a steady stream deep into the wound, leaving no crevice unwashed.

For me, healing began with continuous reminders of baptism. The words "Child of God, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever" gave me courage and hope.

The Tuesday night that Stephanie disappeared, she left her dorm room and rode her bike to a quiet pasture outside Greeley, Colo. She swallowed a bottle of Sominex and died of hypothermia.

We spent Wednesday night searching for the daughter we loved more than life itself. It

V. Richard Haro

The healing process: The author tends one of her horses

was Ash Wednesday, a bitterly cold night, unrelentingly dark and utterly without hope.

The search narrowed to a farmer's field. I couldn't pray as I watched the searchers' flashlights crisscrossing on the dark snow and heard the handlers urging their dogs to keep trying. But unbidden, the words repeated themselves in my mind: "Stephanie Ann, child of God, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever."

I remember that Ash Wednesday night whenever I witness a baptism and hear those words—and Stephanie is very present.

The antiseptic word: The next step is to apply antiseptic ointment. Antiseptic—"against poison"—stings and soothes at the same time.

Plenty of poison exists in our suffering—guilt, bitterness, self-pity and resentment. Our only weapon against it is the Word who is Christ, our Lord, the words of Scripture and the true bread from heaven in the Eucharist.

Sometimes I receive help from the stinging words of the lamentation psalms. "Is God without any power at all?" the psalmist cries. "Has his steadfast love ceased?" (Psalm 77:8). Hearing that, I know I'm not alone; someone else has asked the question.

At other times, I'm soothed by Paul's words: "I am convinced that neither death, nor life … nor things present, nor things to come … nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39 NRSV).

First contacts: Directly over a horse's wound, I place a Telfa pad, which won't stick to the wound and tear it open when it's removed.

We usually receive the shocking news of tragedy from an official source—a doctor or nurse, a law enforcement officer, a coroner. You never forget their words or tone of voice. It's unbelievably helpful when the news comes in a caring but objective way.

Also in this vital front line stand pastors, family and friends who come in the middle of the night to hold your hand in the Garden of Gethsemane and point you gently to Easter. And bless that staunch church committee, usually made up of women, who drop everything to put together a casserole, bake a cake and feed you.

Plenty of poison exists in our suffering—guilt, bitterness, self-pity and resentment. Our only weapon against it is the Word who is Christ, our Lord, the words of Scripture and the true bread from heaven in the Eucharist.

continued on page 6

Proud flesh
continued from page 5

Gauze of prayer: Then I carefully wrap gauze around the horse's leg. It's a loosely woven net. You can see through it, and you use a lot of it.

As I came through Stephanie's death, and especially following Missy's accident, I became a fervent believer in the airy net of intercessory prayer. When I couldn't pray for myself, I was gratefully aware that I was being swaddled in the prayers of others.

Supporting the wound: Next comes the cotton batting. It supports the injured leg and protects the wound from bumps. Soft to the touch, it's a comforter, a stabilizer.

The community of Christ, the congregation of faithful, loving and caring friends, provided this support to me following Stephanie's death and Missy's accident. They kept me alive when life no longer held meaning for me.

I remember the faces of sisters and brothers in Christ who didn't know me personally yet who took the time to be with me and my family at our most wounded. They celebrated with us when we were blessed with our own Easter miracle.

For Missy wasn't killed in that car accident. Her best friend, Ann, was also in the car. Ann died. In the gruesome aftermath of the accident, the girls' identities were confused. People came and rejoiced with us. They sat with us when Missy was in surgery—and as we grieved for Ann.

Christ's rising from the grave is a sign of our own rising from our graves, from woundedness to healing, from hopelessness to joy, from death to new life.

Pressure and protection: Over all these layers goes the vet wrap. It protects from dirt and water while applying pressure to the wound. Pressure is key to preventing proud flesh and promoting healthy healing. It requires a careful touch.

Vet wrap is elastic. The more you stretch it, the tighter it becomes. The trick is to apply the right amount of pressure. Too little and proud flesh will develop; too much and circulation is cut off and gangrene sets in. You can kill the horse you're trying to heal.

Nowhere have I experienced the paradox of pressure without constriction more than around the Communion table. The Lord's Table has provided the greatest healing for me.

I wanted to go to church on the Sunday after Stephanie died. I needed to receive the Eucharist; I felt driven to the true bread. But I wasn't ready for the love and caring that I knew was waiting for me at my congregation. It would have smothered me that morning. I needed a smaller, more intimate setting with some degree of anonymity.

I knew a smaller church nearby offered an abbreviated Communion service at 7 a.m. I set out for church before the sun had risen. I knelt at the Communion rail, and I'll never forget the healing pressure of a chunk of bread and a tiny glass of wine being pressed into my hand. I'm convinced that the Eucharist must be celebrated whenever the people of God gather. Every worship service must offer that healing to the wounded who gather.

The healing process takes a terribly long time. Every few days, you remove all the bandages, apply fresh ointment and gauze, cotton batting and vet wrap. Eventually the wound heals. You have staved off proud flesh. There will, of course, be a scar. It will always be there, a reminder that healing happened in that place. And so it is with me.

"Put your hand into my wounds," the risen Jesus said to Thomas, "and you will know who I am." Christ's wounds descended into the grave with him, and they came up with him. Rising didn't remove them.

Christ's rising from the grave is a sign of our own rising from our graves, from woundedness to healing, from hopelessness to joy, from death to new life.

Because of Christ's rising I know the deaths that I have experienced and will experience are not the last word of my story. But as I rise up I still bear the wounds. New life doesn't remove them. They mark me. They tell me where healing has happened. If you want to know who I am, put your hand in.

Terry Bowes lives in Longmont, Colo. This article is reprinted from the April 1999 issue of The Lutheran.

V. Richard Haro

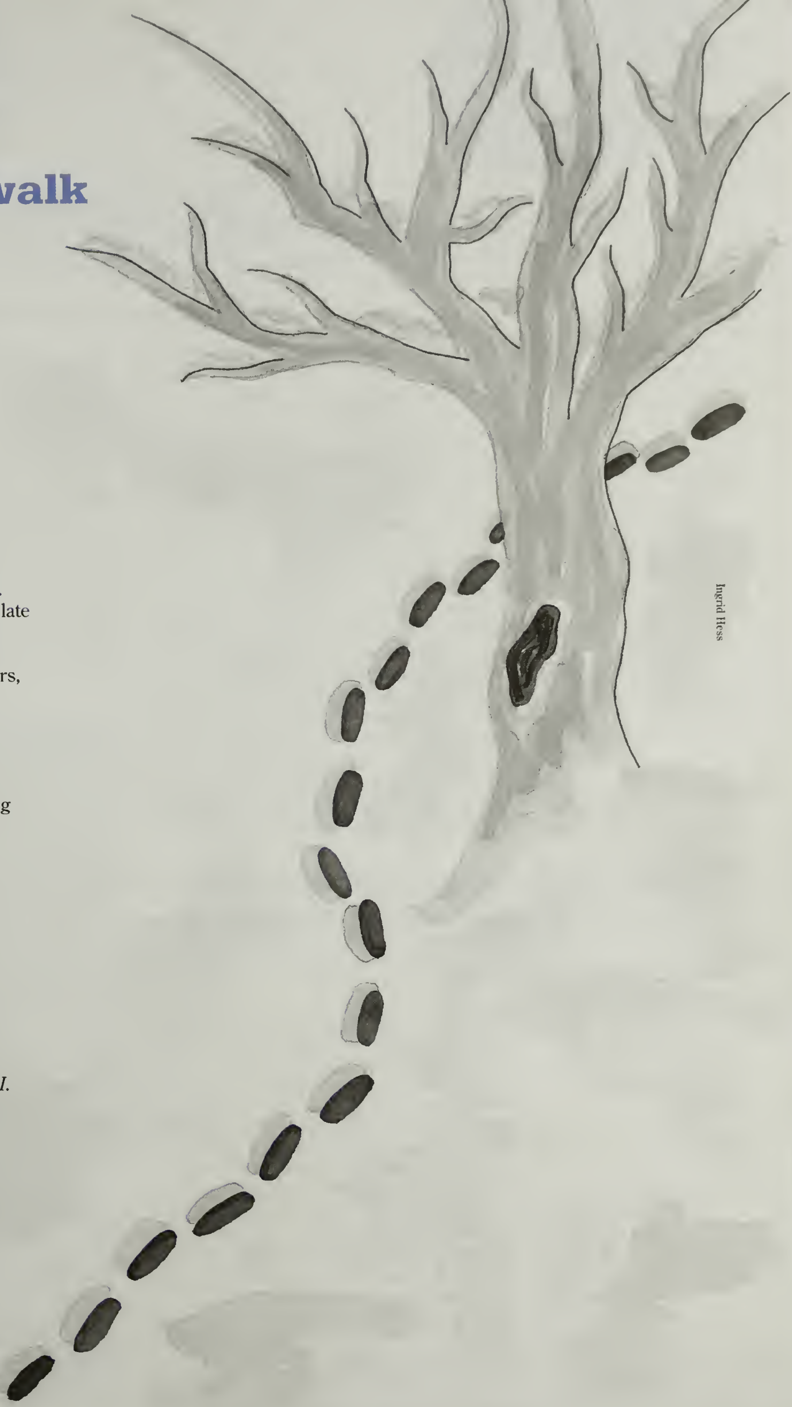
The wound heals: The author with one of her horses

December walk

by John Grey

Not even early snow
can drive me inside.
I crack open that
intrusive frosty shell
with eager feet,
bust its interloper heart.
Trees appreciate the gesture,
flutter their foliage
at the tip of my walk,
let loose by wind
and the rebellious shriek
of the birds that stayed.
They echo summer in attitude
if not greenness.
It's appreciated but unnecessary.
To me, even that fluttering spatulate
gutted brown
is a new leaf.
With a splash of crusading fingers,
I find current in
the stream's stiffness.
The forest steps back,
listens for my footsteps.
It's me,
the lone ranger of deep breathing
and his sidekick dreams.
We continue to thrash about
in that crimson-copper paradise
even as December blackens
the edges of the light,
strains it lean and fragile.
No fireplace cutting out
a universe of convenience
like paper flowers.
I continue to
live outside the space provided.

John Grey lives in Providence, R.I.



Ingrid Hess

Advent reflections
first in a series

Baby Jesus, refugee

Jesus' experience as an infant in Egypt reinforces our commitment to help refugees.

by Krista Rigalo

Displaced, uprooted, whatever terminology you want to use, our Savior came down from heaven and took on the identity of the most diminished in human experience—the refugee.

As told in the Gospel of Matthew, Mary and Joseph were first displaced by a government policy and started their family life in a barn. Later, due to persecution that could have resulted in the infant Jesus' death, they sought asylum in Egypt. In his infancy, Jesus lived on African soil as a refugee.

I think about this as I prepare to help distribute 180 metric tons of food aid to displaced people in and around Luanda, Angola's capital. In preparation for the distribution, I have made several trips with the Christian Church Council of Angola (CICA) to the internally displaced camps, some 12 miles outside of Luanda.

The camps of aging green canvas tents never cease to shock and humble me. People who were once independent—farmers, teachers, businesspeople—are now forced to live on hand-outs in harsh, unstable conditions due to continuing conflict between the government and rebels.

> I am continually reminded of the words of Jesus, who knew firsthand the sorrow of being uprooted: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

Mennonite Central Committee has worked with CICA for more than 15 years, providing humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable in this country plagued by a 40-year conflict. The food, seeds, tools and program support we give are deeply appreciated by the beneficiaries, but to us the aid never feels like enough. MCC simply does not have the means to feed, clothe and support more than 2 million displaced Angolans. Yet we realize, too, that what is most needed is not something we can give. Peace has to come from within Angola.

As we struggle to identify the ways in which MCC can walk meaningfully with the refugees and displaced in Angola, I am continually reminded of the words of Jesus, who knew firsthand the sorrow of being uprooted: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). Faced with the seemingly endless needs of refugees and displaced in Angola and throughout Africa, we feel called more than ever to faithfully remember and honor the Christmas story.

Krista Rigalo, Harrisonburg, Va., and her husband, Fidele Lumeya, are Mennonite Central Committee country representatives in Angola. Krista is a member of Shalom Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Angels in mud boots

Each time Christmas rolls around, I remember the first Christmas program we had in the village of Goricaj, Albania, in 1995. I was teaching a children's Sunday school class in the village. The 25 children and I prepared a program for their parents. It took place in the empty shop where church services were held.

We used flannel-graph figures to represent each segment of the Christmas story. The children came up in pairs, and one moved the figures while the other explained the next part of the story in his or her own words. Between each segment a choir of children sang an appropriate Christmas song. We even wrote one ourselves to fit a segment for which we didn't have a song.

The parents were impressed by the flannel graph and by the children's telling of the stories.

I vividly remember the choir of angels in mud boots and winter coats, standing there singing, wearing little white choir collars I had sewn. After sloshing their way to the service, the children's muddy boots attested to the village way of life, and joy gleamed in their radiant, angelic faces.—*Martha Miller Zimmerly, Orrville, Ohio, a member of Orrville Mennonite Church. She and her husband, Glenn, spent six years in Albania, doing church planting and community development work through Eastern Mennonite Missions and Mennonite Central Committee.*

Advent reflections
second in a series

Christmas celebrations in Zimbabwe

In spite of a lack of resources, Christians in Zimbabwe celebrate Christmas.

by Doris Dube

I remember a Christmas morning long ago in Makhalisa village. It was still dark when my aunt's voice pierced the quiet as she sang and celebrated the new day:

"Lamhla yi Khisimusi
(Today is Christmas Day)
Mina ngingafanga
(And I am still alive.)
Inkosi iyangithanda
(The Lord loves me)
Masidumise!"
(Let us all sing!)

As she sang she went from hut to hut, pulling open the doors as she continued her song. Soon the whole village was awake, and we couldn't help but join in the song as we greeted this Christmas Day.

We exchanged the "Khisimusi," our Christmas greeting, and simple gifts, such as a handful of wild fruit or nuts. That morning, instead of the usual mealie porridge we were given a treat: tea with bread and jam.

After this feast, we gathered in the family room for worship, which was central to our family life. Grandfather Makhalisa read to us the Christmas story. We sang the usual Christmas carols in our language, Ndebele, and were reminded of the precious gift of God's Son and the change he brought to the destiny of humankind.

In my childhood days, Christmas Day and New Year's Day seemed to flow into each other. The working members of each family usually bought new clothes for the rest of the family, because part of the celebration was being able to turn out in a new dress. It was fun to admire each other's dresses and debate which was the most beautiful. For the rest of that week, although we went about our normal duties, we were in a state of celebration until New Year's Day.

A cultural belief said that on New Year's Day the sun dances as it rises. Everyone woke up before sunrise and wrapped themselves in blankets to keep out the cool morning air. We found comfortable places to sit and await this miracle. When the sun rose, we convinced ourselves that it really danced.

Again that morning we had bread, tea and jam, followed by special worship to remind us of the gift of life we could not take for granted.

I experienced a different kind of Christmas as I grew older and became a working young adult. Sweets, cakes, rice and salads replaced the bread and jam. In those years, worship was still central, but exchanging cards and gifts became more common. As God blessed me with a loving husband and children, I no longer just listened to others share the Christmas story but was challenged to help my own children understand and appreciate the meaning of this season of celebration.

In recent years, great changes have affected our celebrations in Zimbabwe. I see less food on the Christmas table. I hear traders lament the lack of business as fewer people spend money on gifts, new clothing and the usual Christmas trimmings. Travel is also affected as more people find that they cannot afford bus rides to visit their families.

Now I hear of another kind of celebration. Our economy is such that materially we have little with which to celebrate, but I have observed that we are richer in loving each other.

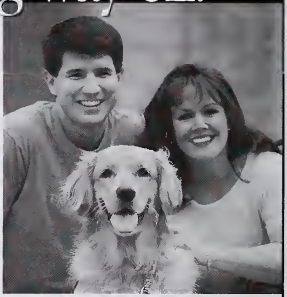
Our economy is such that materially we have little with which to celebrate, but I have observed that we are richer in loving each other.

In Bulawayo Central Brethren in Christ Church, where our family fellowships, Christmas is a time when the church women make hampers to share with those less privileged in our community. Countrywide I hear messages of thanksgiving, and we celebrate the gift of life even as we mourn loved ones lost through the HIV/AIDS scourge. I see jobless family heads relying on Christ as their provider. Though the annual rains have come late and crops have failed, I hear the voice of hope rising to overshadow that of despair. Christmas is still a season of celebration. It is a time when we enjoy and give the free gift of God's love.

Doris Dube and her husband, Jethro, are Mennonite Central Committee country co-representatives in Zimbabwe.

Retirement seems a long way off.

Do we need to be concerned about it now?



The simple answer is "yes!" But, life is not so simple. While people say you need to begin planning, saving, and investing now for the future, what's often not so clear is "why" and "how."

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Longtime evangelist and preacher George R. Brunk II stands in front of one of the tractor-trailers used to haul equipment for the Brunk Evangelistic Association revivals, started in 1951 by Brunk and his brother Lawrence. A 50th anniversary celebration drew some 250 people to the Eastern Mennonite University campus in Harrisonburg, Va., Nov. 17-18.

In-tent on proclaiming the whole gospel

Revivals became important part of Mennonite landscape

HARRISONBURG, Va.—They were unprecedented events in the life of the Mennonite church.

In the summer of 1951, people flocked to a large tent north of Lancaster, Pa., to hear evangelistic messages by 40-year-old preacher and evangelist George R. Brunk II and to sing hymns and gospel songs led by his brother, Lawrence Brunk.

The first meeting was held June 3 that year in a lot across from East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, but a bigger location was soon needed because of the swelling attendance. An estimated 15,000 people attended the final night of that first tent crusade that lasted seven weeks.

Over the next 30 years, the Brunk Evangelistic Association, based in Harrisonburg, held more than 100 tent crusades across the United States and Canada.

On Nov. 17-18, about 250 former associates and supporters gathered at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Brunk revivals and reflect on what God was pleased to do through this unique evangelistic outreach.

At a Saturday night banquet, Myron S. Augsburger, himself a widely traveled evangelist and a former EMU president, said the Mennonite church "experienced a new thrust of revival and has been changed forever" by the crusade effort.

The revivals, Augsburger said, "brought an emphasis on assurance of salvation and on personal infilling of the Holy Spirit and a new understanding and experience of God's grace.

"Many people felt a call to consecrate themselves to a life of service, with many pastors and mission workers coming out of that experience," he said.

A Sunday worship service coincided with George R. Brunk II's 90th birthday. He marked the event by doing what he has done so many times: preaching. Brunk walks slowly with a cane and is battling respiratory problems and prostate cancer, but the booming voice and measured cadence remained.

Using passages from 1 Peter, he called on his listeners to "be strong, to get your roots down deep in the truth of God's salvation.

"Dark days are likely ahead for the Christian church, but there is a great reward, a supper of the Lamb, awaiting those who remain faithful," Brunk said.

EMU president Joseph L. Lapp presented him with a plaque in recognition of his many years of evangelism and service as dean of Eastern Mennonite Seminary from 1967 to 1976.

Parked next to EMU's Lehman Auditorium was one of the original tractor-trailers used to haul tents and other equipment for the revivals. When completely refurbished, the rig will house historical photographs and documents, a video presentation and other Brunk revival memorabilia.—*Jim Bishop*

Game takes youth to 16th century

For one night, the Bethel College campus in North Newton, Kan., became 16th-century Europe.

As part of a weekend retreat, more than 100 South Central Conference and Western District Conference youth on Nov. 3 participated in "Got Gutz," a simulation of the experiences of 16th-century Anabaptists.

The youth were divided in groups of about 10, then sent onto the darkened Bethel campus to visit nine "safe houses," where early Anabaptist leaders waited. For example, Menno Simons was under a walking bridge, Pilgram Marpeck was in the Science Hall attic and Michael Sattler was in an old railroad boxcar at the edge of campus.

At the same time, four battalions of soldiers were trying to capture the Anabaptists and take them to the dungeon—under the stage of the Fine Arts Center—which featured a judge, inquisitor, rack and stocks.

Among those portraying the Anabaptist leaders were members of the Mennonite Church USA Historical Committee, which was meeting on campus. Also participating were more than 75 students from Bethel and Hesston (Kan.) colleges.

Across the country, responses to Sept. 11 events wrapped in flags, blankets and hospitality

For Peace Community Mennonite Church in Aurora, Colo., current military activities are not just about Afghanistan, New York and Washington. They are also about Argentina, Canada, Ireland and Poland.

Those are the homes of some of the 53 stranded air travelers who stayed in Peace's church building, located about 20 minutes from Denver International Airport and which became a Red Cross shelter in the days and nights following the tragedies of Sept. 11, when air traffic was grounded.

Although the last travelers left on Sept. 15, pastor Roy Walls says he and other members still receive letters, emails and phone calls from some of those who found food and beds in the church's sanctuary and Sunday school rooms. Peace's hospitality has even added to the congregation's ranks, as one Red Cross volunteer and her family, who recently moved to the area, have started attending. "What we did we did for the glory of God," Walls says.

More than two months later, the events of Sept. 11 continue to affect people who otherwise may have had no direct connection to the terrorist attacks.

- Sixth-grade students at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind., recently mailed letters to Afghan students seeking pen pals. "Our music teacher, Mr. Smucker, thought this would be a good way for us to learn about life in another country, which we are bombing," says student Rachel Hollinger-Janzen. The students are also learning the Lord's Prayer in Arabic and will recite it at their Dec. 18 Christmas program.
- Penn View Christian School in Souderton, Pa., raised $9,533 from its annual hoagie sale for Mennonite Disaster Service's (MDS) work in New York. A corporate grant pushed the school's total contribution to more than $19,000.
- The communities of Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and Hesston (Kan.) College are making comforters for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to distribute to Afghan refugees.
- Neffsville (Pa.) Mennonite Church volunteers spent Nov. 16-18 helping renovate the fellowship hall at First Mennonite Church in Brooklyn to host computer training and English classes for New Yorkers who have lost jobs due to the attacks.
- Schools have held special worship services, seminars and teach-ins to deal with issues raised by the attacks.

Dale D. Gehman

Wilma Miller, who operates an embroidery business in Mount Joy, Pa., holds a peace flag she has started making following Sept. 11. She has sold about 130 of the flags, having received orders from as far away as Germany.

The incident has even affected businesses. Wilma Miller, who runs a one-person embroidery shop out of her Mount Joy, Pa., home, made a peace flag at the request of the wife of her pastor at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church. She wanted an alternative to the U.S. flag.

"I just made one for my minister's wife and myself, and it snowballed," Miller says.

When word of her creation got out, orders started coming in from as far away as Germany and Oregon. Miller estimates she has made about 130 flags, which has kept her busy. "There for awhile that's all I was doing," she says.

Like Miller's flags, Peace Community Mennonite Church's response started with one request. When planes were ordered to land and places for travelers to stay became scarce on the morning of Sept. 11, a congregational member who worked at a motel near the airport called Walls and asked if there was anything the congregation could do. Walls called the Red Cross and offered the church building as a shelter.

In addition to Red Cross workers, volunteers from the congregation stayed in the church around the clock to talk, pray and do anything they could for the stranded passengers. Congregational members also provided transportation.

"I was so proud in the Lord," Walls says, "because they responded with such grace and generosity."—*Rich Preheim with* Mennonite Weekly Review

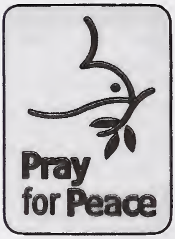
Pin proclaims 'Pray for peace'

As pins of red, white and blue proliferate as clothing accessories, Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada have developed a green-and-gold alternative.

A lapel pin featuring the words "Pray for peace" and the denominational logo of dove and olive branch is available from the Mennonite Church USA communications office in Newton, Kan.

"The pin could open a way to dialogue with folks," says Cindy Snider, Mennonite Church USA director of communications. "We would be doing something as a witness to the way of peace, being bolder about that."

The pins cost $5.95 each, which includes postage and handling. Contact 316-283-5100 or <Newton@MennoniteUSA.org>. Proceeds will go to New York City Mennonite congregations and Mennonite Central Committee's Afghan refugee response.—*Mennonite Church USA News Service*



Economic slump hits institutional endowments, but no one panicking over effects on programs

Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., is one example of what is happening with endowments across the country, thanks to the downturn in the economy. EMU has seen its endowment drop from $18.9 million in June 2000 to $15.9 million a year later.

While that may be bad news, the good news is that the drop in value of the endowments has not hurt many of the programs that those endowments help finance. Ronald Piper, EMU vice president for finance, says the decline has barely affected the programs because EMU follows a strict spending policy that averages out swings in the market. EMU only spends 5 percent of the average market value of the endowment over a three-year period.

Jeffrey Swartzentruber, executive director of the Goshen, Ind.-based Mennonite Foundation, says the current market drop shows why most endowments use a similar three-year average to determine the payout amount. Mennonite Foundation is in charge of investing money for nearly 300 institutions, most of them Mennonite or Anabaptist. The foundation currently oversees $380 million worth of investments.

"When you have a great year, you're not going in and pulling more money than you should and when you have a year like this one, you're not going in there and pulling more than you should," Swartzentruber says. "If it is an endowment fund, you've got to be looking out 10, 15, 20 years into the future. We have not done anything that would change our discipline of stock picking."

Swartzentruber could not disclose financial losses or gains without permission of Mennonite Foundation clients. But he admits that it has been a tough year on endowments.

"Obviously the Mennonite Foundation has seen a decline in the market value based upon what's happened in the overall market," he says. "But on the whole, we are not panicking. We are staying the course with all the different disciplines that we use to make buy-and-sell decisions."

James Histand, vice president for finance at Goshen (Ind.) College, agrees with such a conservative investment philosophy. He says the school has seen a drop in its endowment, which is in the neighborhood of $100 million. He declined to give exact amounts.

"Almost every endowment fund or retirement fund has dropped," Histand says. "Our endowment is very diversified across a broad spectrum of stocks, bonds and real estate investments, so it does not fluctuate as wildly as many of the reported market averages.

"One or two down quarters have relatively minimal effect on overall spendable dollars we use. New contributions to the endowment are always being added, even in lower market times. So it is rare for the actual spendable dollars to decrease."—*Brian R. Hook*

Charitable giving slow since Sept. 11

Mennonite institutions across the country are feeling the effects of the heightened economic downturn following the events of Sept. 11.

Ronald Piper, vice president for finance at Eastern Mennonite University, reports decreased giving to the Harrisonburg, Va., school. "We have noticed a cautiousness toward making long-term commitments," he says.

Dave Worth, resource director at Mennonite Central Committee, says MCC has also seen a slight drop in giving.

At Goshen (Ind.) College, Charlotte Kroeker, interim vice president for institutional advancement, says the school has not seen a drop in giving. But calls have come in asking if contributions might be delayed due to the drop in the stock market.
—Brian Hook

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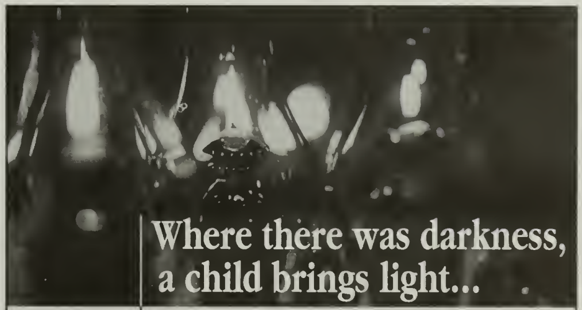

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At reunion, stories celebrate COM work

100 attend event commemorating GC mission efforts

HESSTON, Kan.—Workers who collectively represented several centuries of overseas mission work gathered Nov. 9-10 to reflect on the past and look ahead to a new chapter of Mennonite mission. About 100 people met at a Hesston conference center for a Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) "family reunion."

"This has been a good day, one I won't soon forget," said COM executive secretary Ron Flaming at the reunion's closing worship service. "I believe transitions should be cared for and celebrated."

COM, as well as Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Home Ministries, will be succeeded by Mennonite Mission Network (MMN), the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA, effective Feb. 1, 2002.

"God continues to be about reconciling the world to God's self," Flaming said. "As the church, we are called in new and creative ways to go forward."

The reunion participants—mostly former workers but also current and former staff members and board members and two current workers—worshiped, shared stories and learned about plans for the emerging MMN.

James Juhnke, history professor at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and COM worker in China from 1987 to 1988, was the speaker for the Nov. 10 worship service, relating the accounts of early workers such as Samuel Haury, the first General Conference Mennonite Church missionary, and Maria Miller Brown, a pioneer in China.

"Hundreds of Mennonites like these were called to mission work," he said. "They were people grasped by a great vision and taken hold of by a great movement. The Mennonite mission movement was one of progressive change that moved from nothing to the greatest unifying force in the church."

But not all the stories told were so weighty. "We all know Mennonite missionaries are very serious, sober-minded folk, not given to unnecessary frivolity and laughter. … Not true," said Howard Habegger, COM worker in Colombia from 1963 to 1968 and COM executive secretary from 1971 to 1982.

He told of his struggles to learn Spanish while in Colombia. After several months, he preached a sermon on Christian hope. Afterward, Colombians asked him if he knew what he said because the Spanish words for hope, beer and cherries all sound similar. "They told me they now felt it was OK to drink beer and enjoy cherries after hearing my sermon," Habegger said.

A similar anecdote came from Roland Brown, son of Maria Miller Brown and a doctor with COM in Taiwan from 1960 to 1991. One day in the operating room, he made a request, and the rest of the staff burst out laughing. "Instead of a cotton suture, I had asked for a noodle," Brown said.

Most people agreed that even humorous tales reflected important lessons. Said Juhnke, "In our stories, we glimpse the graciousness of God in our own limitations, failings and fumblings."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Left to right: Mary Derksen, Virginia Claassen, Deb Graber and Lois Voran look at photos from Japan during the Commission on Overseas Mission's "family reunion" Nov. 9-10 near Hesston, Kan. Derksen, Claassen and Voran are all former COM workers in Japan, while Graber is Voran's daughter and grew up there.

Former seminary, mission leader dies

Andrew R. Shelly of Newton, Kan., a longtime General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) administrator and pastor, died Nov. 18. He was 88.

A native of Pennsburg, Pa., Shelly pastored congregations in Kansas, Ontario and Pennsylvania. In 1947, he began work as a fundraiser for the fledgling Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago and was the principal fund-raiser for the new Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. Shelly also taught classes at the school.

From 1960 to 1971, Shelly was executive secretary of the GC Board of Missions (now Commission on Overseas Mission).

He was a popular speaker and prolific writer. His last published article was "Keep on Visiting" in the Nov. 6 issue of *The Mennonite*. —*GCMC News Service*

MCC scores with youth work in Germany

FLUGPLATZ, Germany—Seizing an opportune moment, Andreas Kerner, 15, dribbles past his taller opponent and heads for the basket. With some uncertainty he pauses to toss the ball up. It circles the rim and drops through the net; a grin spreads across his face.

On most Saturday mornings, Andreas is in the gym learning basketball drills from Cam Kroeker, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) volunteer who runs programs in a small community center in Flugplatz sponsored by German Mennonite and other agencies.

Kroeker and his wife, Corrina, from Winnipeg, are working to help youth in Flugplatz, in the former East Germany, adjust to a new country and enjoy what many call a dead-end town. Most residents are "Aussiedler," emigrants with German background from the former Soviet Union. Some, but not all, have Mennonite background.

Flugplatz, which translates as "Flightplace," was built in the early 1930s and served as a Nazi airbase during World War II. It became the second-largest Soviet base in East Germany but was closed in 1993, leaving behind an eerie spread of empty runways, hangers and apartment buildings.

The German government planned to reestablish the abandoned town by directing immigrants there. The Aussiedler who move to Flugplatz receive government stipends and benefits if they stay for three years. But Flugplatz has little to offer its new residents, and most leave for western Germany once three years have passed. During the past four years, the town's population has slid from 1,200 to about 600.

Since moving to Flugplatz in May, the Kroekers, who earlier served with MCC in Ukraine, have organized activities including basketball, volleyball, cooking classes and visits to Berlin, about 60 miles away. One of their most popular events is a Friday-night gathering for youth. These weekly meetings are primarily social, but the Kroekers also use the time to invite the youth to discuss their community, opinions and dreams. Attendance varies from five to 15 people.

Alla Hoffman, 18, recently began attending the Friday night gatherings. Her family came to Flugplatz from Kazakhstan nearly four years ago. "[Cam and Corrina] ask a lot of interesting questions," she says, and adds that she's made several new friends at the meetings.

Says Alexander Voth, also 18, "We often talk about our interests and about our hopes for the future."

Many of the gatherings are held in the meetinghouse of Christliche Glaubensgemeinschaft, a congregation initiated in 1994 by previous MCC volunteers.

The Kroekers' work is part of a joint program of Berlin Mennonite Church, German Mennonite and Lutheran church agencies, Mennonite Church Canada, the district municipality and MCC.—*Maria Linder-Hess of MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Maria Linder-Hess

Andreas Kerner, right, plays defense against Sergei Voth during basketball practice in Flugplatz, Germany. Mennonite Central Committee worker Cam Kroeker started the basketball sessions as part of his work among the community's youth.

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Attacks' effects loom over MEDA meeting

CHICAGO— Just as Chicago's skyline is dominated by the Sears Tower—the tallest building in the United States—Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) supporters gathering in the Windy City Nov. 1-4 found their thoughts and prayers dominated by the events of Sept. 11.

A total of 645 people attended MEDA's annual convention, which was held with Partners for Christian Development, a like-minded organization based in the Christian Reformed Church. The convention was preceded by a special one-day seminar on the effects of globalization on poor farmers in the developing world and featured 26 seminars on various faith and work-related topics.

During a special session, convention participants met in small groups to share how the events of Sept. 11 have affected them and their businesses. Many indicated that their businesses were suffering: Orders were down 30 percent at one, while another said shipments to and from Canada were taking from four hours to 24 hours longer than before.

Many commented on how often God's name was now being heard following the tragedies. "People seemed to find faith very quickly," said one person. Others wondered how to combine love of country and allegiance to Christ. "How can you be patriotic but remember that God is the God of all people?" asked another person.

Sept. 11 and its effects also found their way to the agenda of the MEDA board of directors, who passed a resolution expressing their desire "for an end to terrorism and all acts of violence, wherever they occur," their hope that "the families of the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks will find healing, hope and the support they need to face the future and survive their grief" and "our desire that the people of Afghanistan may soon experience peace and economic well-being."

In other business, MEDA and Mennonite World Conference agreed to find ways to work together to facilitate contact between Mennonite businesspeople around the world and to enable North American businesspeople to work with MWC members where possible.

The board also heard that MEDA received nearly $1.3 million in contributions during the 2001 fiscal year. Combined with grants, contracts, business operations and investment earnings, MEDA had a total budget of $5.7 million for its programs in 29 countries.

Convention speakers included Richard Mouw, president of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., and Don Eberly, deputy director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

How can you be patriotic but remember that God is the God of all people?

—MEDA convention participant

family gathering

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Groups find school-kit project a class act

MCC gets 4,600 kits from Ten Thousand Villages stores

GLEN ELLYN, Ill.—As students in Glen Ellyn returned to school this fall, they decided to also help others' education.

As part of their "Character Counts" program, the students at Lincoln School collected supplies to fill school kits for their local Ten Thousand Villages store. Thanks to such community involvement, Ten Thousand Villages and its partner stores across the United States collected more than 4,600 school kits for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). From July to October, schools, Rotary Clubs, 4-H clubs and churches donated notebooks, crayons, pencils, rulers and, in some cases, hand-sewn bags for children around the globe.

MCC photo by Charlene Conrad

Prissie Nguyen, a volunteer at the Ten Thousand Villages store in Richmond, Va., prepares a school kit to be sent to Mennonite Central Committee's warehouse in Ephrata, Pa. Ten Thousand Villages stores nationwide this year collected 4,600 kits.

A 4-H club in Champaign, Ill., donated 100 school kits, sewing the cloth bags as a club project. In Brookline, Mass., the Ten Thousand Villages store manager and her husband donated their tax rebate check to the project, purchasing enough supplies to fill 170 kits. In Sonoma, Calif., a women's sewing group made bags, allowing the local Ten Thousand Villages store to donate nearly 400 school kits.

The Richmond, Va., Ten Thousand Villages store has collected school kits since 1996, including a store record 1,377 in 1999.

In Denver, the Cherry Creek Rotary Club connected with Ten Thousand Villages in 1999. That year, the national Rotary Club president encouraged members and clubs across the United States to connect with like-minded organizations for work and service in their communities. Since then, collecting school kits for MCC has become one of the 30-member club's annual projects, this year donating 360 school kits.

The Rotary Club provides medical and dental assistance to people in Third World countries as well as material and financial aid to organizations in their local community.

"We can't do this service alone," says Lee Trachtenberg, who coordinated the Cherry Creek effort. "We need to find allies and other groups to work with."

Ten Thousand Villages is a program of MCC. MCC last year collected and distributed 68,000 school kits in orphanages, children's shelters, schools for disabled children and refugee camps in 14 countries.—*Juanita Fox for MCC News Service*

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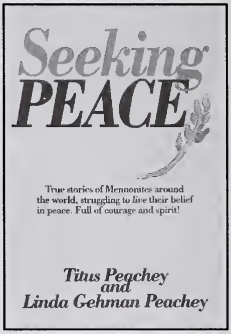
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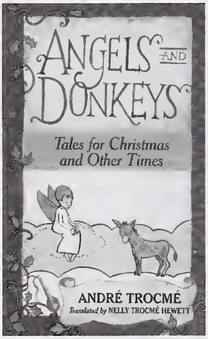
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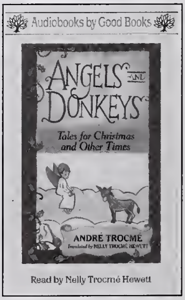
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Five protesters arrested at military facility

FORT BENNING, Ga.—Four Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members and a teenage supporter were arrested Nov. 18 for trespassing during the annual protest at the facility formerly known as the School of the Americas.

Scott Kerr and Ben Horst, who were jailed for two days before being released on their own recognizance, face up to one year in prison. No trial date has been set. Sara Reschly, Esther Ho and Helena Graham, a 17-year-old CPT supporter from Tiskilwa, Ill., have been barred from the site for five years.

The five were among 85 protesters who were arrested for demonstrating against the Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation, located at Fort Benning. Formerly known as the School of the Americas, it provides counterinsurgency training to Latin American soldiers.—*CPT News Service*

Suffering, joy theme for MWC 2003 assembly

STRASBOURG, France—The theme for the next Mennonite World Conference (MWC) assembly will be "Sharing Gifts in Suffering and Joy," drawing from 1 Corinthians 12, the primary biblical text selected for the gathering, which will be in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in 2003.

The events of Sept. 11 have made the theme particularly relevant, MWC officers and senior staff said in a statement. "1 Corinthians 12 states concerning the body of Christ, 'If one part suffers, every part suffers with it,' " the statement says. "The church is not about being fair-weather friends, but it is about coming together for encouragement and prayer during times of adversity."

Plans continue for a youth gathering, which will focus on faith and life issues. But the program is contingent on funding.—*MWC News Service*

Bluffton board approves construction projects

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Growing enrollment has prompted the Bluffton College board of trustees to authorize three construction projects and development of plans for a new residence hall.

Approved were expanding the student union by 4,000 square feet, remodeling Ramseyer Theater and upgrading Mosiman Hall, the music building. The three projects will be funded through a two-year, $5.1 million campaign.

The new residence hall plans come as the college projects a shortage of 30 to 50 beds next year. This year Bluffton was 15 beds short. Groundbreaking for the new facility is scheduled for next summer.

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Births

Bergey, Andrew David, Nov. 2, to David and Lori Gross Bergey, Perkasie, Pa.

Buller, Paton Tobias, Nov. 8, to Karla Yoder and Tom Buller, Hesston, Kan.

Dutchersmith, Luisa Irene, Oct. 4, to Kent and Teresa Dutchersmith, Goshen, Ind.

Early, Lukas Eian, Sept. 12, to Annmarie and Christian Early, Pasadena, Calif.

Hall, Shenandoah Rose, Oct. 30, to Brad and Dorcas Hall, Line Lexington, Pa.

Hostetler, Lee Andrew, Sept. 20, to Stefan and Robyn Baer Hostetler, Marshallville, Ohio.

Landis, Timothy Cole, Oct. 31, to Matthew and Tana Landis Landis, Telford, Pa.

Lengacher, Gabriel, Sept. 18, to Kyle and Karen Shrock Lengacher, Wooster, Ohio.

Mast, Hailey Lynn and Regan Leanne (twins), Oct. 4, to Jeremy and Nicole Valderrama Mast, Goshen, Ind.

Mast, Joel David, Oct. 20, to Galen and Tami Ripke Mast, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Kiley Breann, Oct. 26, to Kenton and Margie Broni Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Moyer, Jason Michael, Nov. 1, to Michael and Linda Latshaw Moyer, Boyertown, Pa.

Schmidt, Emily Louise, Nov. 5, to Durango and Stephennie Seirer Schmidt, Buhler, Kan.

Shank, Sarah Beth, Oct. 19, to Greg and Bethany Miller Shank, New Paris, Ind.

Smucker, Andrew Russell, Oct. 14, to John and Beth Hochstetler Smucker, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Bechtel/Schrock: Laura Bechtel, Greenwood, Del., and Joel A. Schrock, Greenwood, Oct. 27 at Cannon Mennonite Church, Bridgeville, Dela.

Deaths

Beck, Esther Thut, 88, Sonora, Calif., died Oct. 28. Spouse: Carl Beck. Parents: John and Anna Brubaker Thut (deceased). Other survivors: children John Joseph, Carol Yamamoto, Sharon McCloe, Sarah Monfils; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

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Bergen, Elizabeth "Isby," 93, Altona, Man., died Nov. 1. Parents: Gerhard and Elisabeth Dyck Bergen (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 5 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Byler, Ruth Mary, 84, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 7. Parents: Jesse and Agnes Gunden Byler (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 10 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Ediger, Marjorie Reimer, 73, Denver, died Nov. 5. Ex-husband: Peter J. Ediger. Parents: Gerhard and Eva Kroeker Reimer (deceased). Other survivors: children Irene Savoia, Joseph, Janice King, Duane; three grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 9 at Arvada (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Enns, Waldo, 89, Inman, Kan., died Nov. 2. Spouse: Hulda Dyck Enns (deceased). Parents: Jacob J. and Sarah Balzer Enns (deceased). Survivors: son Don; two grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 7 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Esch, Carolyn Weaver, 66, Arvada, Colo., died Oct. 25 of injuries received in an accident. Spouse: Vic Esch. Parents: Edwin (deceased) and Irene Weaver. Other survivors: children Linda Bontrager, Rod; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 28 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Friesen, Mary Stobbe, 84, Altona, Man., died Oct. 28. Spouse: David K. Friesen (deceased). Parents: David and Anna Stobbe (deceased). Survivors: children Audrey Young, Judith Malko, Cathleen St. Louis, David, Ted; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 2 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Hartzler, Ethel Frances, 72, Harrisonville, Mo., died Nov. 4 of a stroke. Parents: Clarence and Nellie Hartzler (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 7 at Sycamore Grove Mennonite Church, Garden City, Mo.

Kauffman, Lois Elizabeth Miller, 57, Iowa City, Iowa, died Oct. 29. Spouse: Nyle Kauffman. Parents: Gretchen Walters Miller (deceased) and Lloyd Miller. Other survivors: children Timothy, Karl, James, Sarah; three grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 31 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona, Iowa.

Ramer, Irene Hartman, 99, Elida, Ohio, died Oct. 30. Spouse: J. David Ramer (deceased). Parents: Perry and Rebecca Hartman (deceased). Survivors: children Milton, Ralph, Charlotte Martin, Catherine Endersby Bridenbaugh, Margaret Schrock; 20 grandchildren; 48 great-grandchildren; 10 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Pike Mennonite Church, Elida.

Schrock, Josephine Richard, 78, Wayland, Iowa, died Nov. 1. Spouse: Elmer Schrock. Parents: Emma and Peter Richard (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 5 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Shank, Olga Csorba, 75, Columbiana, Ohio, died Oct. 27. Spouse: Carl Shank. Other survivors: children Douglas, Jeffrey; eight grandchildren. Burial: Oct. 31 at North Lima, Ohio.

Smucker, Irene Yoder, 90, Bluffton, Ohio, died Oct. 28. Spouse: Carl F. Smucker (deceased). Parents: Joseph M. and Lida Klopfenstein Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Larry, Mary Conrad, David Rempel Smucker; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event. Email your announcements to themennonite@mph.org or log on at our Web site: www.themennonite.org.

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  Contact Pilgrims Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 217, Akron, PA 17501 or email <abstau@desupernet.net> for more information. If you are a former member and cannot attend, contact us and tell us where you are today.

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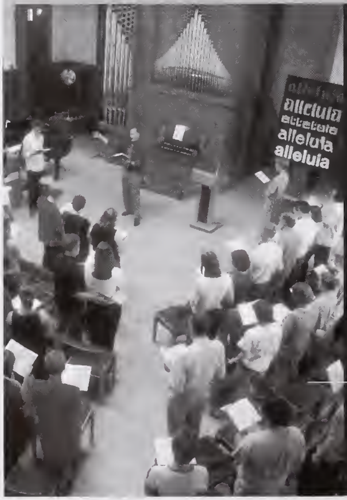

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The ethics of ballistic missile defense

by Barry Hieb

President Bush's ballistic missile defense system proposal has its roots in the system first proposed by President Reagan in 1983. The current BMD program envisions a limited set of rocket interceptors guided by a massive radar system to destroy incoming warheads. Additional systems based in the ocean, in the air and in space are being considered as possible enhancements to the components that are currently being tested.

The fundamental goal of the BMD program—attempting to make the world safer from the horrors of nuclear holocaust—is commendable. However, as Christians we are called to examine the means as well as the ends of human activities, and the means of BMD contain a series of fatal flaws and ethical shortcomings.

Ethics: I will not deal here with the technological feasibility of BMD, even though I do not believe the system can work. The focus here is ethics: Should we try to implement a BMD, and what are some consequences if the United States attempts to do so? This question is even more important in light of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, which have placed a premium on all projects designed to protect against terrorism.

There is little money available in the federal budget for new projects. BMD will be expensive. The cost to implement even a rudimentary defense against ballistic missiles will require hundreds of billions if not trillions of dollars. Existing programs, such as Social Security, Medicare, education, health care or transportation will be raided to provide funds for BMD.

For Christians who value educating children and caring for those who are ill and in need, it is inappropriate to divert funds from these programs to fund the development of missile defense.

Faith in technology: A fundamental tenet of BMD is that we place our faith in technology as the way to achieve peace. True peace, according to this view, consists of being able to deploy sufficient kinds and strength of military hardware to ensure that we are not attacked.

Mennonites interpret the Bible to speak differently on this issue. True peace is a result of the long, painful, difficult but immensely rewarding effort to find ways of living that are mutually affirming and sustaining. This is a costly and challenging effort because, in order to achieve peace, we must be willing to accept personal risk. But we are willing to do so because of our assurance that this is what Christ wants us to do and that Christ, not technology, is our defense.

The existing antiballistic missile (ABM) treaty between the United States and Russia specifically outlaws many of the activities needed to test and implement BMD. Not only Russia but virtually all U.S. allies have indicated they do not wish the United States to violate this treaty. However, President Bush has indicated he will proceed with BMD, even if it violates the ABM treaty.

For Christians who believe our word represents a binding commitment, the willingness to violate an international treaty for the sake of BMD testing is a serious issue. In addition to being ethically indefensible, it may have severe unintended side effects. What if Russia, China or other nations decide they can unilaterally violate whatever agreements they find to be unreasonable in the pursuit of their own strategies? Is President Bush really ready to declare that, in effect, each nation can do whatever it pleases?

Even if the current administration feels the conditions imposed by the ABM treaty are not appropriate, it is morally bound to adhere to those conditions until it has negotiated changes to them. To do otherwise is to open the door to anarchy in international relations.

We need to pray for all sides involved in this conflict and be ready to place ourselves at risk, if necessary, in order to help others better understand how Christ can bring true peace to this situation.

In light of these ethical considerations, Mennonite Church USA is called to act. We need to collectively think through this issue to reach consensus, then make our opinions clearly known to the current administration. We must call on the administration to repent and rethink its plans before irreparable harm is done. We need to pray for all sides involved in this conflict and be ready to place ourselves at risk, if necessary, in order to help others better understand how Christ can bring true peace to this situation.

Barry Hieb is a member of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz.

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Everett J. Thomas

A truckload of hope

To us a Child of hope is born,
To us a Son is giv'n;
Him shall the tribes of earth obey,
Him all the hosts of heaven.
Him shall the tribes of earth obey,
Him all the hosts of heaven.
—John Morison in "Scottish Paraphrases," 1781

We need hope in times like these. The Advent season is a time to wait and to hope. This season reminds us that until 2,000 years ago, generations of faithful people were still waiting for their hopes to be fulfilled. Fulfillment came bundled in swaddling clothes and slept in a food trough licked by animals. The infant child, delicate and vulnerable in that stable, was the way God provided hope to his people then and the way God offers hope to us now.

Hope is the expectation that our desires will be fulfilled. Recently I realized that a 40-year-old desire had been fulfilled. I almost failed to take notice.

This fulfillment came through a wire service photo of Russian president Vladimir Putin with George W. Bush at Bush's Prairie Chapel Ranch in Texas. The two men were in Bush's pickup truck, grinning like schoolboys on the first day of summer vacation. Their delight in each other was evident; I found myself wanting to jump in the back of the truck and go camping with them.

In these days of anthrax and Afghan manhunts, we are called to be a church that lets God's hope flow through us.

The two presidents not only expressed admiration and affection for each other but agreed to reduce the number of nuclear missiles pointed at the two countries. Forty years ago, such a moment seemed impossible.

Those were the days we practiced bomb drills at the Willow Street (Pa.) Elementary School. The fire station next door would suddenly wind up its siren to simulate Russians dropping bombs on our sleepy little town. We dutifully dove under our desks.

This practice and the national angst of those days devastated the hopes of children. I grew up assuming that I would not live to be an adult because of the policy of "mutually assured destruction." This hopelessness endured into adolescence. When the hormones kicked in, I remember asking God to work out the timing of the coming nuclear war so that at least I would not die a virgin.

But four decades later, the picture in the newspaper shows the presidents of these two nuclear powers cavorting in a pickup truck and grinning like troublemakers bent on covering the neighbor's house with toilet paper.

Suddenly I was filled with hope. We survived! Our countries did not destroy each other and the whole world. A third-grader's deep yearning for peace and right relationships was quietly rewarded. Decades of hopelessness melted away.

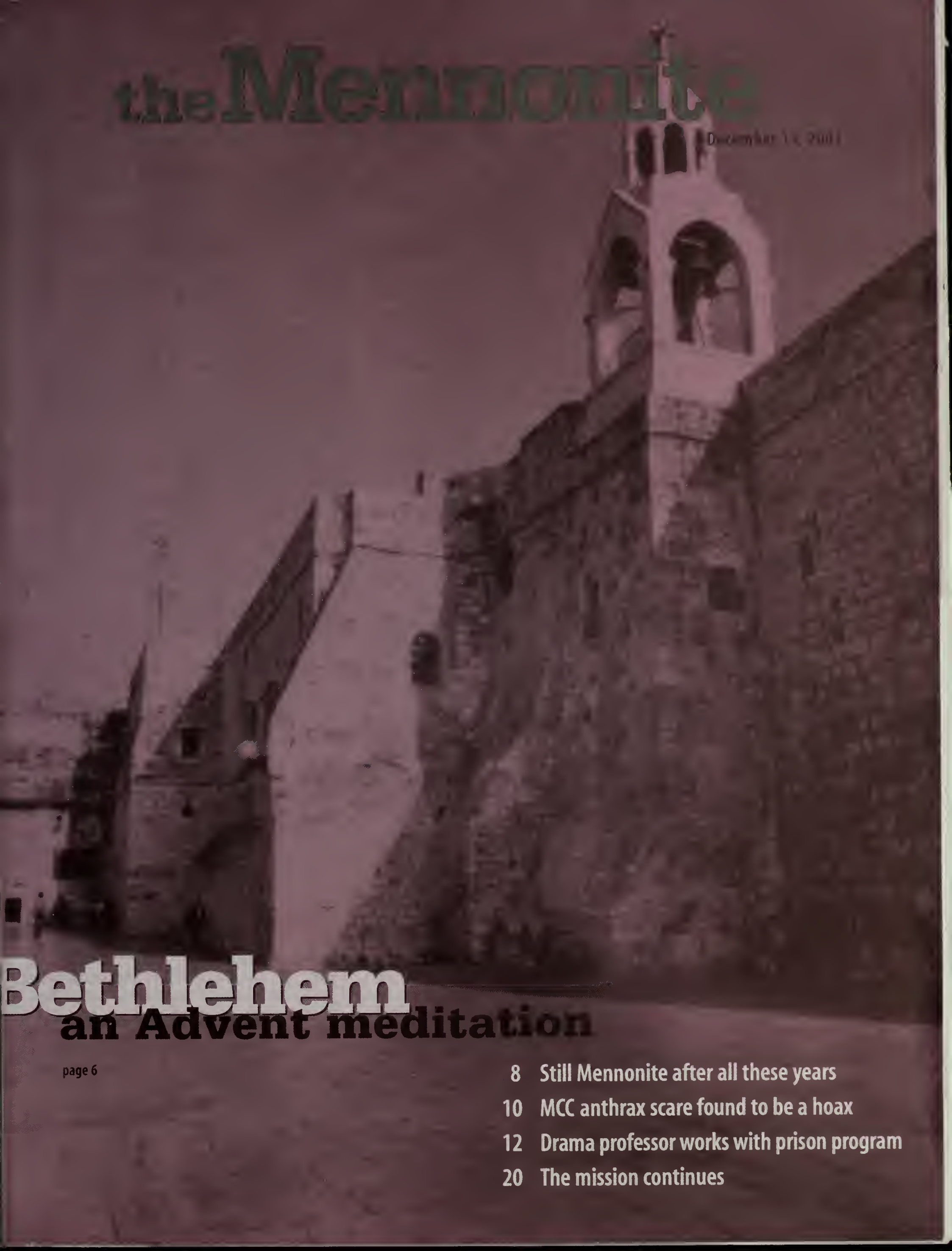
If this hope has been rewarded, why not our hopes for the next 40 years? After all, our church claims hope as one of two centerpieces in its vision statement. Mennonite Church USA calls on us all to be followers of Jesus Christ "so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world."

What exactly is hope, and for what can we be hopeful this year? Hope is different from faith. Faith, as Webster defines it, is belief and trust and loyalty to God. Hope, on the other hand, is the expectation that our desires will be fulfilled. One way to be filled with hope is to notice and celebrate those places in our daily lives across the street and around the world where our hopes have come to fruition.

In these days of anthrax and Afghan manhunts, we are called to be a church that lets God's hope flow through us. Advent is the time when we gather around God's hope, embodied in the flesh and blood of an infant in a stable. Indeed, to us and for the world, a child of hope is born. This child, whose birth was anticipated for millennia, carried within his little body the "hopes and fears of all the years." The Creator of our universe has come among us as a tender and helpless infant, inviting us to place our hope for the future in him. Him shall the tribes of earth obey, him all the hosts of heaven.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

December 11, 2001



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an Advent meditation

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Prayer proof

"Thankfulness in Action" (Nov. 20) asks us if it is possible to pray a complete prayer of praise and thanks only. Here's proof:

Thank God for my family, for 60 years of life with a wonderful Christian woman. Thank God for my Christian parents and the stories of Jesus my mother taught me as a child. Thank God for providing me with a wonderful Christian girl for my lifemate and mother of my children. I thank God for supplying all our needs, spiritual and physical. I thank God for the heritage we have of the first Thanksgiving feast of the Pilgrims in a new land, expressing their love for and thanks to God and neighbor for help and guidance. Above all, I thank God for sending us Jesus to save a sinful world that crucified him. Heavenly Father, forgive us our sins and trespasses. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.—*Darol Bingley, Haslett, Mich.*

Fruitful option

In publishing anything about Germantown Mennonite Church ("Eastern District Disciplines Germantown," Nov. 20), *The Mennonite* had two options. One was to focus on the boundary maintenance issue and report the pending expulsion of this congregation by Eastern District and ultimately by Mennonite Church USA. The other was to tell about the positive things that are happening at Germantown: the growing number of people attending, plans to restore their second floor to provide more space for their expanding ministries, their recent decision to become a sister congregation of a church in Colombia and indeed their recent ordination of David P. Weaver, a well-qualified and spiritually gifted hospital chaplain. Although the article said nothing about the latter, it did well to highlight the historic place of this church in American Mennonitism.

Certainly one of the tests in the discernment of the mind of Christ is our Lord's teaching, "You will know them by their fruits." In the discernment of divine truth, there are two possible errors. One is to adopt an opinion as the truth when, in fact, it is wrong. The other is to adopt an opinion as wrong when, in fact, it is true. In the case of Germantown, the one error would be to deny them full partnership in the body of Christ because we believe their acceptance of covenanted gay and lesbian Christians is sinful when, in fact, such covenanted partnerships turn out to be acceptable to our Lord. The other error would be to continue to relate to Germantown as a full member of the conference when, in fact, its policy of accepting sexual minorities undermines the body of Christ.

If we believe that boundary maintenance is more important than inclusive love, we will likely choose the first risk. But if we believe that the fruits test is more important than the "teaching position" adopted at Saskatoon and Purdue, we will likely choose the second risk.

Regardless of which risk we take, I think all of us would be constantly sobered by another admonition of Jesus, "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).—*Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

Bible times

I read with appreciation the emphasis of Eddy Hall's article, "The Bible and the Painting That Came to Life" (Nov. 13), including his warning against the temptation to raise the authority of the Bible above God. I very much agree that the Bible is "a window on the eternal through which God is revealing himself and his purposes and his perspectives."

But what a shame that Hall felt he had to make his point by falling back on Christian stereotyping of the Pharisees, who, it is said, can only relate to the Bible "as little more than a rule book." What a shame that with such a broad brush (and a quote from 2 Corinthians 3:6) Hall reduced the entire Old Testament to "the old way [which] ends in death" and "a handbook of rules." Curious that he should fall into these well-worn traps, especially after correctly stating that "the Scriptures, to be rightly understood, have to be read in context."

It is time to confess that the Christian critique of the Pharisees is a prejudicial cheap shot born of ignorance. It is a perpetuated misunderstanding of the dynamics of Jesus' ongoing intra-Jewish debate with them. It is a false assumption to equate their commitment to and love of the commandments as lifeless drudgery. It is this kind of ironic self-righteousness that forced such a hurtful and hateful wedge between Christian and Jew from the close of the first century to this very day.

The greatest irony is that Hall should commend the canon of Scripture to us with one hand while ripping out four-fifths of that canon with the other. He leaves us with false comfort: Mennonites who have too long neglected the majority of the Bible to focus exclusively upon Jesus' gospel; Mennonites who have neglected

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The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

the very Bible Jesus read to gaze out upon the eternal. Hall has piqued our interest by showing us the open window. Please don't take it away from us now by pulling down the shade. *—Gary F. Daught, Tucson, Ariz.*

I see from the "The Bible and the Painting That Came to Life" and the accompanying editorial, "Permanence for a Time of Uncertainty," that the editors of *The Mennonite* have eliminated the Bible as the ultimate authority for guiding our lives. Can we now look to other sources? If so, where? When we disagree on a code of conduct, where will we turn for guidance? Shall we now simply do what is right in our own eyes? To claim that the Pharisees kept the commandments of God is not at all biblical. Why else would they be called hypocrites? In Matthew 15 and Mark 7, Jesus excoriated them for laying aside the word of God and replacing it with their own traditions.

I suggest reconsidering this idea of rejecting the authority of the Bible while still honoring it with your lips. Sometimes we get an idea that appears right in our eyes, but when it rejects the authority of the Word of God, it always ends in the way of death. By having a form of godliness while denying its authority, we will end up with an imagined intellectual superiority, always fascinated with learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. Please don't overlook the fact that the Scriptures are inspired of God. They are designed to be used for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in the right way of living. Even though we know God, if we do not glorify him by being obedient to his Word, our thinking will become warped and our hearts darkened. Then we will find ourselves to be those of whom Paul writes about in Romans 1.*—Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

**Cover photo
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I call for a rebirth of conviction in persistently searching out and helping people the Bible refers to as the "least of these."

—Andrew R. Shelly, "Keep on Visiting," Nov. 6

An amazing man

I was impressed with and happy to see "Keep on Visiting" by Andrew R. Shelly (Nov. 6). He mentions that his mother was "an amazing woman." I should like to add that Shelly was an amazing man. I first met him when I was a member of Germantown Mennonite Church in Philadelphia and frequently an Eastern District Conference delegate. I learned of many things Shelly did, but when I read the article I learned how much he did with humility.

In the late 1970s or early 1980s, Shelly was invited to become a member of the advisory board of the Rambo Committee-Sight for Curable Blind, founded in 1924 by Victor Rambo, a missionary physician to India. The board of directors, of which I am a member, knew of Shelly's chronic eye problem and felt he would be a valuable asset. After reading his article, I am quite sure that he contributed much through home visits for the Rambo Committee. Who but an amazing man would be able to contribute through his well-written article at age 88. I am sure the Lord has used this man with his concern for others more than we will ever know.*—F. Arline Zimmerman, New Holland, Pa.*

By the sword

We need to be careful removing verses from context or applying them literally when overwhelming testimony and evidence points otherwise. The broad spectrum of Jesus' life consistently demonstrated the rejection of force. Dorothy D. Liechty cites Luke 22:36 as Jesus' authorization for his disciples to take up the sword if need be (Readers Say, Nov. 20). *Expositor's Greek Testament,* in commenting on that passage, says," What he [Jesus] says about a sword is not to be taken literally." Further comments clarify that Jesus is pointing out to his disciples that they will be facing a different setting, one that is hostile, even warlike. The days of peaceful strolling, preaching and healing are over. The reference refers to Luke 9:2, the sending out of the 70, where they were authorized to "take nothing ... not even a tunic."

The scene changes shortly, but Jesus' testimony and life do not. He stands before all authorities, his life lived among them his only defense. His telling Peter to put down his sword in Gethsemane unbuckled the sword for all Christians. The early church knew and practiced this.

I invite Liechty to read James C. Juhnke and Carol M. Hunter's new history book, *The Missing Peace.* Their chapter on the Civil War clarifies that this American tragedy need not have happened. The slaves were not freed by the war. President Lincoln allowed the war to happen to "save the union." There were alternatives; they just weren't seriously considered by many. War intoxicates with quick and seemingly easy slogans that mesmerize the people and lead almost inevitably to the idolatry of nationalism. War is an illusion that forcefully demonstrates that he who wields the sword is pierced by it just as the one who receives its terrible point.*—James D. Yoder, Hesston, Kan.*

National interests

I read the Oct. 23 issue, which finally clinches the fact that I am no longer part of the Mennonite Church. "Does God Bless America?" by Donald B. Kraybill, with his seeming judgments of national idolatry and divine sanctions and another writer's comment of "valid" reason for other nations to hate us just made me sick. Yes, God bless America! And he has blessed America. We are a Christian nation, by and large, and our freedoms and values are founded in Christian faith. We were attacked by an evil as hideous as Hitler himself.

I am sorry you ponder the validity of our nationalism where you are safe and warm with your freedom of speech and religion. If you do not want to participate in our national pride and continue to attack American culture, then put your ideas where your mouth is. Live as the Amish and separate yourselves from America. It is still a free country, thanks to our strong defense, as of World War II to the present and those who killed and died for it.

Multicultural understanding and love are not going to win over the terrorists, nor will you be able to negotiate with them. They must be utterly destroyed from the face of the earth.

Do not forget: Christ, with his saints and legions of angels, will return and destroy the armies that will come against Israel. Do you have a problem with that, too?*—James P. Buller, Goshen, Ind.*

I'm troubled by some of the language used by Karl S. Shelly ("To Witness for Peace in a Time of War," Speaking Out, Oct. 30.) Words such as "retaliation" and "deadly vengeance" are used to describe the U.S. government's actions in Afghanistan. Does Shelly really know the reasons for the action? If so, how does he get this information? Why such a judgment on the U.S. government? How is that judgment a witness to peace?*—Ray Landis, Okotoks, Alta.*

What are Mennonites thinking?

ARTICLES, ESSAYS, AND OPINIONS

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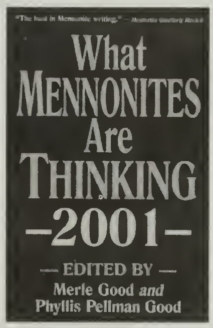
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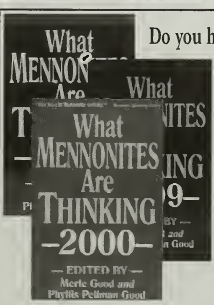
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Bethlehem

An Advent meditation on Matthew 2:13-23

by Dorothy Jean Weaver

CPT photo for illustration only

The world into which Jesus was born was not an especially pretty one. The Palestine of Jesus' day was a world of grinding poverty for the masses, hard labor for a daily pittance, wealthy tax collectors who made their fortunes by extorting money from the impoverished, and brutal military occupiers whose preferred method of crowd control was crucifixion for all those who dared rise up and resist the occupation.

The town of Jesus' birth was not an especially peaceful place, hardly the idyllic Bethlehem of our beloved Christmas carol, lying "still" under the "silent stars" in "deep and dreamless sleep." The Bethlehem into which Jesus was born was soon to know the terrifying clank of military steel, the bloodcurdling shrieks of terrified children ruthlessly slashed to death by Roman soldiers "just doing their job" and the heart-rending cries of anguished mothers inconsolable over the brutal massacre of their innocent infants.

When God comes to be with God's people, it is not to an idyllic, fairy-tale world of beauty and peace and "dreamless sleep."

Two millennia later the picture looks strangely similar. The Palestine of today is a world of massive unemployment and growing poverty. Bethlehem, with its sister cities Beit Jala and Beit Sahour, knows only too well the terrifying sounds and scenes of war: the menacing drone of helicopter gunships, operated by soldiers "just doing their duty" and raining down death and destruction from the skies; the rapid-fire report of machine guns aiming live ammunition at live human beings in deadly confrontations on the ground; the heavy and horrifying boom of tanks that send shells smashing through the stone walls of ordinary houses, fill children's beds with glass shards and turn defenseless civilians into refugees without a home; the screaming of Palestinian children, too frightened to go to bed; and the voiced and unvoiced anguish of Palestinian parents incapable of protecting their little ones from the ongoing terror and the ever-growing destruction all around them.

This is the world and this is the hometown of Jesus Emmanuel, "God with us." When God comes to be with God's people, it is not to an idyllic, fairy-tale world of beauty and peace and "dreamless sleep." There would, in fact, be no need for "God with us" in that type of world. The world that Jesus Emmanuel comes to, rather, is the real world that all of us know somewhere, somehow, at some time: the world of poverty, extortion, callous cruelty, unrelenting terror and inconsolable grief. It is this world, and none other, into which God comes to be with us in the person of Jesus, the defenseless child and the crucified Messiah.

The God who comes to be with us in Jesus, born in Bethlehem, is a God who walks our streets, experiences our daily struggles, shares our pain, weeps our tears, suffers our humiliations and dies the most agonizing of human deaths at the hands of his enemies. This is our God, the one who "comforts those who mourn," claims peacemakers as "children of God" and grants inheritance in the kingdom of heaven to those who "hunger and thirst for justice." This is Jesus Emmanuel, God with us. And this is the good news of the kingdom. Thanks be to God.

Dorothy Jean Weaver teaches New Testament at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. She wrote this article in Bethlehem in 2000 in the midst of the violence and uncertainties of the Al Aqsa Intifada (Palestinian uprising).

Advent reflections
third in a series

Waiting for angels' message of hope

Remembering a man whose life and death heralded Advent

by Reuben Glick Shank

The words "Don Lucrecio is no more" greeted my wife, Kristi, and me during the first week of Advent last year. After a brief vacation, we had returned to Bañado, the Bolivian village where we serve with Mennonite Central Committee. We stared, unbelieving, not understanding. Doña Matilde continued patiently, "Don Lucrecio has passed away. They buried him yesterday."

Don Lucrecio was a middle-aged father in the prime of life, a respected leader in Bañado. He apparently went up into the hills, drank poison and wasn't found for three days. Kristi and I slid to the ground, crying for a man who always gently and sincerely asked, expecting an honest answer, "How is life in Bañado for you, and what can I do to help you?"

In time, we learned that as the community's law representative and a man of great integrity, Don Lucrecio committed suicide out of pain and shame for the blame placed on him as father of a son jailed for theft (unjustly so, we eventually discovered). Our Advent was darkened. The pain and gaping absence in community meetings was evident. News of his loss was reflected in all eyes we met and was heard on everyone's lips. Some feared others would follow his example, since the local farmers' cooperative was struggling with an increasingly desperate debt burden.

I was worried and hurting as well, wishing I could have been there, done something more. I am here in Bolivia to be of service, yet as is often the case, all I could do was be present with the family and pray. Pray for healing. Wait for new hope and new life for Don Lucrecio's wife and children, for the community, for Kristi and me. That Advent, we believed and waited, though our feelings were in turmoil.

Two weeks later, I sat in a local farmers' cooperative meeting where Don Lucrecio had often raised his voice in support of new ideas. We had begun with a minute of silence and communal prayer for the deceased. Night had long since fallen, and fog was rolling in following the first rains of the year. The cooperative was lit by a single bare bulb, which shone on 12 members gathered to again debate their outstanding debt.

Then I heard his reassuring voice: "Do not be afraid, Don Reuben. Don't get scared."

I remembered the two long motorcycle rides I had taken with Don Lucrecio to visit a cooperative member who had moved away. At the time I was still learning to ride a motorcycle. Rocky river crossings and steep, narrow gravel roads were unsettling if not downright scary. Sensing me tense up, Don Lucrecio would repeat, "Do not be afraid. Don't get scared, Don Reuben."

We wavered but never fell. Four hours later we were home, mission accomplished. Now, through the gloomy mood of this late-night meeting, only days before Christmas, I could hear again faintly: "Do not be afraid. Don't get scared."

And then the words of Luke 2:10b-11 came to me: "For see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Thus Don Lucrecio's life and death came full circle and heralded Advent for me.

I pray that whenever my path gets difficult and scary, amid the tears, I will remember Don Lucrecio's words: "Don't be afraid."

This Advent, as the first year of grieving passes, we still remember Don Lucrecio. And I pray that whenever my path gets difficult and scary, amid the tears, I will remember Don Lucrecio's words: "Don't be afraid." Patiently I will again wait for the angel to speak the good news of great joy for all the people. And with renewed hope I will join all creation in echoing the multitude of the heavenly host: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill among all people!"

Reuben Glick Shank and his wife, Kristi, are Mennonite Central Committee workers in Bañado, Bolivia. Their home congregation is Millersburg (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

why I became a Mennonite

fifth in a series

Still Mennonite after all these years

One of the hallmarks of Mennonite faith is that members choose to join the church. It is a voluntary community. We offer a series of articles by members of Mennonite congregations who write about why they chose to become Mennonite. We hope these stories help us all reflect on our own relationship with the new Mennonite Church.—**Editors**

by Ryan Ahlgrim

Folks in the Mennonite church used to look at my last name and ask, “Did you grow up Mennonite?” I’ve never quite known the right answer. On the one hand, my parents are from Lutheran background and they had me baptized as an infant in the United Church of Christ. On the other hand, they sent me to a Mennonite church Sunday school when I was 4 or 5 years old, and I was rebaptized in the Mennonite church when I was 12. My parents, as well as my sister and four brothers, all joined the Mennonite church. But the theology I was exposed to at home was significantly different from the theology I learned at the church, and today I am the only member of my family who has remained in the Mennonite church.

Meekness, even more than our peace position (although they are related), is the true genius of Mennonites and is the healthiest and most faithful witness we have to offer the world.

So I am neither a Mennonite neophyte who chose this faith as an adult nor a person from Mennonite background. I feel like an insider and an outsider, at home but not fully privileged. For me the question is not why I became a Mennonite but why I remain one.

Point of view: My sister and brothers left the Mennonite church when they became teenagers, but I did not. Unlike them, I developed meaningful friendships among the other youth in the church, and this in turn led me to choose the same school they chose—Goshen (Ind.) College. While my home congregation did an excellent job teaching me Anabaptist history and doctrine, it was Goshen that soaked me in the mentality and ethos of Mennonites. The courses in Bible, theology and history also grounded my commitment to an Anabaptist point of view.

I also differ from my siblings in my childhood love for the pastorate. My pastors always inspired me; I was in awe of their role. And when they saw my interest in ministry, they actively guided and nurtured me. When I graduated from college, my home church created the position of youth pastor so they could hire me (and later others) and I could test my calling. This resulted in my decision to attend Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and go into pastoral ministry within the Mennonite church. Nearly 20 years later, I am a Mennonite serving Mennonites.

Meekness: During the last few years I have been struck by the overriding characteristic of Mennonites that I consider our most valuable virtue: meekness. By this, I mean our casual disregard for wealth, fame, status or power.

While I was in seminary, I worked with a United Methodist pastor. I was taken aback by his driving ambition to climb the ladder of ecclesiastical success. Since then I have noticed other Protestant denominations dominated by clergy whose goal is to be appointed to ever-larger churches and receive ever-larger salaries. In contrast, my fellow Mennonite pastors serve congregations because they love them. A talented pastor may move from a large church to a small one, and a brand new seminary graduate may become pastor of a fairly large church. It makes no difference. Ladders are largely ignored. Service motivates us.

This attitude extends to our congregations as a whole. On Sunday mornings our church parking lots are not filled with symbols of status, and we do not dress to impress. We are farmers and doctors, teachers and janitors—not for the money or status but because these are our callings, the best ways we know how to serve.

I am not claiming that Mennonites are without ambition or envy or that I know the truth about all Mennonites, but when I look at the society around us, I am overawed by the difference. To a remarkable degree we do not push or coerce our way through life; we live gently, whether in the city or the small town. This way of living is not a burden imposed by a stultifying tradition but flows naturally from a healthy faith community that has its priorities right. Meekness, even more than our peace position (although they are related), is the true genius of Mennonites and is the healthiest and most faithful witness we have to offer the world.

Patriotism: Almost as valuable as our commitment to meekness is our ability to clearly separate patriotism from Christian faith. Most denominations seem incapable of making a meaningful distinction, much to the detriment of the Christian faith. Songs in praise of our nation are sung alongside songs in praise of God, and memorials to serving in war hang next to the cross. The implied message is clear: The goals of America are the same as the goals of God.

Mennonites, on the other hand, have retained a healthy skepticism of all nationalism. We love our country and appreciate our form of government, but we never confuse them with God's kingdom and the way of the cross. Because of this, we have the ability to step back from national self-interest and can pronounce a challenging, prophetic word regarding the American way of life. The needs and perspectives of others in the world are as important to us as our own. Although we are productive and constructive citizens, we more naturally identify ourselves as disciples of Jesus than as Americans. This nation, as good as it can be, is not large enough to hold our vision.

When I first submitted this article for publication, I wrote that I was both impressed and disappointed by the peace position of the Mennonite church. I was disappointed because it seemed as if our witness was half-hearted and irrelevant. But then came the tragedy of Sept. 11, and immediately I heard Mennonite voices pointing us in healing, Christlike directions. Two issues of *The Mennonite*, largely devoted to the tragedy and the impending military response, spoke with a depth, goodness and truthfulness that I did not find anywhere else. I have never been prouder of my church than I was then, and I have never been so fully aware of how critically important our peace position is.

Grace-filled action: As I grow more deeply in the gospel, I am increasingly convinced that nonviolence and positive, grace-filled action are at the heart of God and being a disciple. I believe self-giving love, embodied by Christ on the cross, is the underlying fabric of reality and the key to the healing of humanity. In this current conflict, we Mennonites may find our voice as we never have before. It is time for the gospel of peace to be presented passionately and persuasively. The Mennonite peace position is one of the trump cards we must play more effectively at the Christian table.

Despite a lifetime of nurture by the strengths of the Mennonite church, sometimes I am tempted to leave the Mennonites. The Swiss-German and Dutch cultural traditions are too narrow and provincial to satisfy me, and I question whether North American "Mennonite culture" and theology are rich and diverse enough to sustain a missional church capable of meaningful evangelism and transformation in society. In contrast, the Roman Catholic Church has a historical, theological and cultural tradition that is so rich and diverse that it makes our Mennonite theology and culture look anemic. Catholics know how to stand for something and still be a universal church. Mennonites are clearly better at being schismatic than universal.

Cross purposes: I also question my place in the Mennonite church during those times when I recognize I am tugging in one direction while most of the church seems to be tugging in another direction. Will my efforts prove compatible, resulting in a positive contribution to the church? I do not wish to spend my entire ministry at cross purposes with the tides of inevitability. This is a question without a final answer, so I live by faith.

But if I were to leave the Mennonites, where would I go? Certainly I could get along in another denomination, but would it be better? I doubt it. Every group of Christians creates its own unresolvable questions and problems. Besides, this is the church that has nurtured my spirit and shaped who I am. This is the church whose theology can play a critical role in the healing of society. This is the church that has given me my most important friendships. This is the church that affirmed my calling and ordained me for pastoral ministry. And so I am, and continue to be, a Mennonite.

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Courtesy photo

In this current conflict, we Mennonites may find our voice as we never have before. It is time for the gospel of peace to be presented passionately and persuasively.

—Ryan Ahlgrim

MCC anthrax scare found to be a hoax

FBI continues investigation after office evacuation

AKRON, Pa.—A suspicious letter brought the nationwide anthrax scare into Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) headquarters in Akron, but the white powder in the envelope has been determined to be harmless.

"We are delighted to receive the good word from the Akron Borough Police about the letter," says Bruce McCrae, MCC director of administration and resources. "This means all of our workers, in particular our mail clerk and others in the mail room, are safe and healthy."

Akron Borough Police Chief J. Herbert Beard told MCC Dec. 3 that tests on the letter were negative for anthrax or any other harmful substance.

On Nov. 28, MCC mail clerk Agatha Redekop opened a letter in the MCC mail room and was exposed to a white powder. Redekop followed procedures implemented since the anthrax crisis began following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and law enforcement—including the FBI—and emergency services officials were called to the scene. The building, one of four MCC-related offices in Akron and where 70 people work, was evacuated and the ventilation systems shut down. The office reopened the next day, but the mail room was sealed and mail handling moved to another MCC facility until test results were received.

While we have always hoped for the best, we were prepared for the worst as well.

—Bruce McCrae

Mennonite
Central
Committee

MCC

A suspicious letter with a white powder forced the evacuation of this Mennonite Central Committee office building in Akron, Pa., on Nov. 28. But test results reported on Dec. 3 said the powder was not anthrax or any other harmful substance.

The handwritten letter read in part: "Have you taken your penicillin lately? Death to America. Israel is death." The envelope had no return address, although the postmark indicated Richmond, Va.

The letter was taken for testing to a Pennsylvania Department of Health facility in Lionville. The FBI is continuing to investigate the source of the letter.

"The incident led to several rather tense days of waiting for the results," McCrae says. "While we have always hoped for the best, we were prepared for the worst as well."

The MCC mail room, located in the agency office building on 12th Street, serves three other buildings in Akron—MCC U.S. headquarters, Mennonite Disaster Service headquarters and Ten Thousand Villages headquarters and warehouse—plus the Ten Thousand Villages store and MCC material resources center, both in nearby Ephrata, and two Mennonite-related businesses in Ephrata.

But only the one office building, which houses MCC overseas programs and support services, was evacuated because the mail had not yet been distributed to the other facilities when the suspicious letter was discovered.

"The mail room staff followed the proper procedures," McCrae says, "and will continue all necessary precautions in the future."
—MCC News Service with Rich Preheim

New program at EMU to focus on trauma

HARRISONBURG, Va.—In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 tragedy, Church World Service (CWS) and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg have announced a training program to equip religious leaders in congregations affected by trauma.

The two-year program, which is expected to begin in early 2002 and will be based at EMU, will provide monthly five-day training courses for 500 clergy in New York and elsewhere in the country, as well as for clergy from outside the United States whose countries have experienced trauma. The program is meant to complement one-day trainings already being offered in New York.

The curriculum will address trauma and healing as well as an introduction to justice, security and peace building.

"In the aftermath of Sept. 11, the need for equipping religious leaders to respond to community, societal or global crises is once again being highlighted," says Rick Augsburger, director of the CWS Emergency Response Program and an EMU alumnus.

Anabaptism's visibility rises in South Korea as new resource center celebrated in Seoul

SEOUL, South Korea—After years of planning and even more years of dreaming, the Korea Anabaptist Center (KAC) has become a reality.

About 100 people from across the country gathered Nov. 2 for an opening celebration. KAC is located in space provided by Loving Concern International, a Christian mission and health-food company in Seoul. The center includes a resource library and publishing and will offer seminars and international contacts. The center will also connect Korean groups and individuals interested in Anabaptism. There are no Mennonite congregations in the country, but at least one faith community—Jesus Village Church in Chunchon—and a number of individuals have identified themselves with Anabaptism.

GCMC

Tim Froese (right), a Commission on Overseas Mission-Mennonite Board of Missions worker in South Korea, greets guests at the Nov. 2 service celebrating the opening of the Korea Anabaptist Center in Seoul. Froese is the center's executive secretary.

"We will be working with individuals, groups and churches to actively participate in the mission of God by cultivating biblical discipleship, peace and Christian community and by providing resources, education, training and relationships in the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith tradition," says KAC executive secretary Tim Froese, a Commission on Overseas Mission (COM)-Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker. The center is also supported by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

The opening celebration was held at the historic Seoul Union Church, the grounds of which contain the "foreigner's cemetery" with the gravesites of the first Protestant missionaries to Korea (Methodist Henry Appenzeller, whose mother was a Mennonite, and Presbyterian Horace G. Underwood). Celebration participants reflected the diversity of interest that Anabaptism has attracted among Koreans. Members of Jesus Village Church were instrumental in planning and carrying out the event, and there was a strong showing by graduates and former staff of Mennonite Vocational School, an MCC project following the Korean War. Other participants from a variety of church backgrounds made up a significant percentage of those attending.

Froese says one professor he met for the first time at the celebration had four meetings at the same time, and he chose to come to the KAC opening celebration.

"I met a variety of people from different backgrounds, most of whom were professors, church leaders and professionals, all with a common interest in Anabaptism," says Sheldon Sawatzky, COM-MBM East Asia administrator.

The program began with a worship service led by former staff and students at Mennonite Vocational School. That was followed by lectures by Sawatzky on "Mennonite Perspectives on Peace and its Applications" and by Sung-Do Cha, Jesus Village Church leader and university physics professor, on the Anabaptist movement in Korea.

"This part elicited a fair bit of interest among attenders as they considered the Mennonite perspective on peace in light of recent world events," Froese says.

Each participant in the celebration received copies of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective in Korean. The translation was made possible by a grant from Schowalter Foundation of Newton, Kan., and is the first publication of the newly formed Korea Anabaptist Press.

Froese says the celebration was judged a success. " 'HanKyoReh,' the leading publicly owned newspaper in Korea, published a favorable report in its weekend edition," he says, "and further reports are forthcoming in the local Christian periodicals."—*GCMC News Service*

> **I met a variety of people from different backgrounds, . . . all with a common interest in Anabaptism.**
>
> —*Sheldon Sawatzky*

Dutch exhibit celebrates merger bicentennial

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands—Two hundred years before the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church in North America, there were the "zonnists" and the "lammists" in Amsterdam.

The two groups of Dutch Mennonites agreed to join on April 22, 1801, a union that has been celebrated this year with an exhibition of Mennonite history in the Bible Museum of Amsterdam.

The exhibition, which included Bibles, paintings, artifacts and lectures, followed Dutch Mennonite history, from the radical Anabaptists who ran naked through the streets of Amsterdam preaching the vengeance of God to the development of the movement through church growth in the 19th century.

A special item on display was the dried pear Mayken Boosers, martyred in 1564, gave her son from prison.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Sabbatical drama work with prison program gives Bethel professor new understandings

To put these men in a situation where they must work together for an end product in which they succeed ... was a transforming experience for them and for me.

—John McCabe-Juhnke

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—There won't be a touring production of "Hope Is a Thing With Feathers," directed by John McCabe-Juhnke. Taking the theatrical performance on the road is difficult when the cast is composed exclusively of prison inmates.

For his sabbatical during the 2000-2001 academic year, McCabe-Juhnke, communication arts professor at Bethel College in North Newton, went to jail. He worked with the Arts in Prison program at Lansing Correctional Facility in northeastern Kansas, the state's largest prison.

Arts in Prison, founded by former music director and professor and a Bethel graduate Elvera Voth, strives to use the arts as a rehabilitating tool for inmates. McCabe-Juhnke was inspired to become involved during a 1998 benefit concert at Bethel for the program (see "Arts in Prison," May 8).

"When I listened to former inmates talk about what being in a prison choral group had done for them, I began to wonder what benefits drama could offer in a prison setting," he says.

Twice a week he made the three-hour drive from his home in North Newton to Lansing to present two evening drama workshops. But the project got off to a rocky start.

"When I put up posters advertising the workshops, I had only one person sign up, so I needed to think of a way to convince the inmates to get involved," McCabe-Juhnke says.

He decided to put on a one-man variety show for the inmates, explaining what the theater workshops would be about. By the end of his performance, the sign-up sheet was full and he had 16 aspiring actors to work with.

McCabe-Juhnke began the program by leading workshops that explained some of the fundamentals of theater. The group then soon started on their first production, "Hope Is a Thing With Feathers." It was then that McCabe-Juhnke began realizing some of the challenges he would face.

"One thing that was difficult was that inmates were constantly being transferred to another level of security," he says. "I did most of my work in the medium-security unit, and when inmates were transferred to minimum or maximum, I wasn't able to work with them anymore.

"I finally realized that in this setting, one must give up all control. I had to work with the individuals I had each session and never count on anything as certain."

Another challenge was the relationships among inmates. "Prison is, by nature, a place where men must establish where they belong in the pecking order," McCabe-Juhnke says. "They have lots to prove and it is a highly competitive atmosphere."

In comparison with the regimented, ordered and competitive nature of prison, theater is collaborative and expressive and requires a sense of mutual vulnerability in a group setting. "It was very challenging to attempt to bring those two worlds together but a challenge that was worth taking on," McCabe-Juhnke says.

McCabe-Juhnke

As the performance date neared, he faced another challenge with costumes and props. "Every single thing I brought in had to be checked and thoroughly examined each time I came into the facility," McCabe-Juhnke says. "They wouldn't allow me to lock the items up somewhere in the facility. I had to take everything home each time and then it all had to be checked again when I returned."

The problem was alleviated for the spring performance, three short plays loosely related to baseball, for which he was able to use the prison's baseball equipment.

"I went into this experience feeling like I was going to serve the inmates, but I went away feeling like I was greatly served," says McCabe-Juhnke, who is now starting a similar program at the state prison in Hutchinson, Kan. "To put these men in a situation where they must work together for an end product in which they succeed—and to watch them receive the applause and well-wishes of their peers—was a transforming experience for them and for me."

Back on the Bethel campus, he has a new appreciation for what he does as a drama professor. "This experience taught me that what I do on a daily basis here at Bethel College is special," McCabe-Juhnke says. "Just to see the men's appreciation and excitement for theater, to see what a special privilege they felt they had been given, was amazing to me. I realized that what I do with my students here can be life-changing."—*Rachel Combs*

A decade of mission partnerships has established the pattern for the future, say agency leaders

ELKHART, Ind.—More than 20 leaders representing 11 mission partnerships gathered Nov. 6-7 at Mennonite Board of Missions offices in Elkhart, Ind., to evaluate a decade of collaboration during the fourth annual Partnership Leaders Consultation.

"The kind of work that you are engaged in is prototypical of the direction that the Mennonite Church is going," said Stanley W. Green, former MBM president and executive director of Mennonite Mission Network. "The way congregations and conferences have already made operable partnerships encourages us in the new vision for Mennonite Church USA. We take hold of the vision, knowing that it is not fanciful. You have made it real."

Dean Heisey, partnership consultant for MBM and director of ministry formation for Mennonite Mission Network, said that any new initiative will need to happen as a partnership. Mennonite Mission Network will facilitate collaboration among like-minded people for a common ministry.

MBM defines mission partnerships as collaborative groups whose members form covenants with each other to accomplish specific mission objectives. One such partnership, called Arm in Arm, joins the Mennonite congregations in the Patagonia region of southern Argentina, the Argentina Mennonite Church, a group of congregations in Illinois and MBM.

The Mongolia Support Group was a pioneer partnership. A group of congregations and individuals in eastern Ohio joined hands with the Commission on Overseas Mission, Eastern Mennonite Missions and MBM to provide financial support and personnel for mission in Mongolia.

"One of our challenges is to keep up interest over the long haul," said Matt Hamsher of the Mongolia Support Group.

The eight eastern Ohio congregations that make up this part of the partnership work at maintaining enthusiasm through monthly prayer breakfasts, two annual banquets and visits to Mongolia.

From the beginning, there have been questions about whether the participating congregations in North America will be able to meet partnership expenses in addition to their normal financial commitments to church mission agencies. Those concerns have proved groundless, said consultation participants.

"Our experience is that if you keep people informed and challenged, they will give," said Wayne Toelke of Arm in Arm.

Though a covenant is an important element in the development of a partnership, many cultures find written documents to be a foreign concept. "Some of our Argentine brothers and sisters felt like we were cramping the activity of the Holy Spirit when we insisted on putting things into writing," said Eldon Dean Nafziger of Arm in Arm.

Charles Buller, representative of an Indiana partnership focused on Senegal, said, "World evangelism is an immensely complex task that calls forth every available gift. Everyone has a dynamic place and a role. The scary part is when you take that seriously, you hang on for the ride. Often we feel like we are just hanging on to the reins."

Other ministry locations represented by partnerships in the consultation were Benin, Dagestan, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Honduras, Bolivia, South Africa, the United States and Northern Ireland/United Kingdom. *—Lynda Hollinger-Janzen of MBM News Service*

Church holds 40th annual crafts sale

Members of Fairfield (Pa.) Mennonite Church thought their 40th annual sale of Ten Thousand Villages crafts would be smaller than usual because of the slowing economy.

They were wrong. The Nov. 6-9 event produced $96,000 in sales.

"I can't explain [the sales]," says Joyce Shutt, pastor emeritus of the 35-member congregation. "It was the grace of God. Each year the sale is a miracle. This year it was a stupendous miracle."

In addition to Ten Thousand Villages purchases, customers donated to Mennonite Central Committee, including health kits, comforters and cash for Afghan relief.

Fairfield's annual event started in 1961 after congregational members met Edna Ruth Byler, the organization's founder. They persuaded Byler to send her "unsaleable" items to Fairfield, which then sold them, raising $500 the first time.

Festival sales such as Fairfield's raised nearly $800,000 last year.—*MCC News Service*

EMM

Noteworthy

Timothy Bentch (front center) participates in a recent performance of Haydn's "The Creation" in Budapest, Hungary. He serves with A Song for the Nations, an Eastern Mennonite Missions ministry that evangelizes through the arts. The Budapest concert was the first in a series that will conclude with a sacred arts festival next summer.

this date in Mennonite history

Dec. 11, 1887—Christian Neff, longtime German Mennonite leader and Mennonite World Conference founder, is ordained for ministry at the Weierhof congregation, where he served for 55 years.

MDS signs agreement with Canadian partners

OTTAWA—In a Nov. 15 ceremony in Ottawa, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) joined five other agencies in an agreement to work together in Canadian disaster responses.

Also signing the "Guidelines for Cooperation" were Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Canadian Red Cross, Christian Reformed World Relief Committee of Canada, Salvation Army and St. John Ambulance. The agreement encourages local offices to connect prior to disasters. When disasters then occur, the participating organizations should be able to quickly assess their needs and cooperatively share the workload.

"Formalizing the discussions between these organizations is symbolic of the cooperation experienced in the past," says MDS Region V director Gord Friesen. He worked with many of the organizations during the MDS response to the Red River flooding of 1997.—*MDS News Service*

Hesston volleyball player nationally honored

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College volleyball player DeeDee Martin, a sophomore from LaJunta, Colo., has been named honorable mention All-American for the National Junior Collegiate Athletic Association Division III.

"It's a great feeling to be part of the top 15 in the nation," Martin says.

This year she set a school record for kills in a season with 338. Martin also holds Hesston career records for kills (703) and digs (624). The Larks finished the season with a 25-12 record.

Longtime Goshen education professor dies at 93

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mary Royer, a presence on the Goshen College campus for nearly half a century, died Nov. 28 in Palmyra, Pa., one month shy of her 94th birthday.

Born at Orrville, Ohio, Royer went to Goshen to study before heading to the mission field. She instead discovered a career in education. Royer graduated from Goshen in 1930, then returned in 1933 to teach in the Goshen education department and establish the college's laboratory kindergarten. She also was dean of women until 1936. She officially retired in 1979 but continued teaching for three more years.

Royer's work also included serving as the primary curriculum editor and writer for Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa., for 15 years between 1936 and 1964. She also wrote for Mennonite Board of Education. She earned her doctorate from Ohio State University in 1950, writing her dissertation on the implications of voluntary service on the improvement of teacher education.

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Births

Albrecht, Noah Alexander, Oct. 2, to Richard and Vicki Bowman Albrecht, Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont.
Alderfer, Benjamin Alan, Nov. 1, to Doug and Kathleen Gehman Alderfer, Harrisonburg, Va.
Bender, Abe Michael, Oct. 26, to Mike and Brenda Jensen Bender, Kalona, Iowa.
Bergin, Madelyn Teresa, Oct. 26, to Ian and Sarah Weaver Bergin, Chalfont, Pa.
Cartmel, Caroline Joy, Nov. 10, to Thomas and Anne Sprunger Cartmel, Elkhart, Ind.
Clemens, Nicholas James and Nathaniel James (twins), Nov. 12, to James and Eden Eastman Clemens, Telford, Pa.
Clintsman, Leah Rose, Nov. 1, to Rodney and Cynthia Roggie Clintsman, Lowville, N.Y.
Cobb, Ivan Daniel, Nov. 9, to Adam and Jennifer Schrock Cobb, Archbold, Ohio.
Coblentz, Jada Rachelle, Nov. 3, to Kevin and Julia Ashby Coblentz, Hartville, Ohio.
Derstine, Savannah Grace, Nov. 9, to Justin and Shannon Housel Derstine, Perkiomenville, Pa.
Duerksen, Wyatt Lane, Nov. 16, to Logan and Tara Gore Duerksen, Goessel, Kan.
Eby, Caleb Elias, Nov. 8, to Andrew and LaRee Miller Eby, Portland, Ore.
Flinner, Emrick Paul and Abigail Marie (twins), Oct. 4, to Matt and Kris Miller Flinner, Sugarcreek, Ohio.
Friesen, Jack Garrett, Oct. 12, to Jose and Angela Franz Friesen, Omaha, Neb.
Geiser, Simeon Jacob, Nov. 1, to Karen and Olin Geiser, Kidron, Ohio.
Hardy, Zachary Lee, Nov. 7, to Chris and Sheila Miller Hardy, Inola, Okla.
Hooley, Caitlin Jean, Nov. 7, to Dan and Jennifer Brown Hooley, Hartville, Ohio.
Kliewer, Ava Caroline, Oct. 20, to Christopher and Cara Eshelman Kliewer, Wichita, Kan.
Landes, Dane Thomas, Jan. 24, 2000, received for adoption Nov. 16 by John and Jill Schloneger Landes, Ottsville, Pa.
Miller, Elyse Catherine, Sept. 13, to Troy and Pam Lipely Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.
Miller, John Cameron, Nov. 23, to Terry and Nancy Kramer Miller, Goshen, Ind.
Miller, Virginia Irene, Nov. 5, to Chad and Carmen Heatwole Miller, Sturgis, Mich.
Oostland, Nathan Hendrik, Nov. 21, to Jan and Audrey Mast Oostland, Goshen, Ind.
Stauffer, Phillip Thomas, Oct. 23, to David and Shannon Warfield Stauffer, Orrville, Ohio.
Stoltzfus, Abbegael Hope, Nov. 9, to Michael and Desiree Braley Stoltzfus, Hartville, Ohio.
VandenBrink, Grant Allyn, Sept. 17, to Eric and Allison Troyer VandenBrink, Wooster, Ohio.
Washburn, Alexander Jacob, Nov. 9, to John and Heidi Davies Washburn, Salem, Ore.
Weaver, Julie Marie, Nov. 9, to Michael and Rachel Brubacher Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.
Wenger, Alexa Michelle, Nov. 6, to Jon and Ginger Whyle Wenger, Wayland, Iowa.
Yoder, Brandon Thomas, Nov. 4, to Brian and Sandra Schlabach Yoder, Hartville, Ohio.
Yoder, Logan Michael, Nov. 11, to Jarran and Angela Newcomb Yoder, Kalona, Iowa.
Zehr, Erica Rose, Nov. 14, to Brian Zehr and Melissa Merry, Lowville, N.Y.
Zuercher, Eli Clemens, Nov. 5, to Ian and Andrea Clemens Zuercher, Goshen, Ind.

Correction: In our Oct. 16 issue, the name of Emma Julianna Resto was misspelled.

Marriages

Blosser/Unternahrer: John Blosser, Goshen, Ind., and Rebecca Unternahrer, Goshen, Oct. 13 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.
Cassel/Derstine: Bryan Cassel, Souderton, Pa., and Tracy Derstine, Telford, Pa., Nov. 17 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Comer/Reese: David Comer, Harrisonburg, Va., and Pamela Reese, Harrisonburg, Nov. 10 at Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Cox/Seaman: Neil Cox, Champaign, Ill., and Arin Seaman, Champaign, Sept. 29 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.
Goerzen/Yoder: John Goerzen, Indianapolis, and Terah Yoder, Indianapolis, Oct. 13 at Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.
Harris/Pokorny: Leonard Harris, Lowville, N.Y., and Doris Pokorny, Beaver Falls, N.Y., Nov. 24 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, Lowville.
Jantzi/Watson: Tammy Jantzi, Millbank, Ont., and Troy Watson, St. Catharines, Ont., Nov. 10 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank.
Mast/Sauder: Lloyd Mast, Wooster, Ohio, and Donna Sauder Leola, Pa., Nov. 24 at Laurelville Retreat Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa.
Moser/Tapke: Neal Moser, Croghan, N.Y., and Jamie Tapke, Carthage, N.Y., Sept. 15 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, Lowville, N.Y.

a new magazine for a new church

It's almost here.

The Mennonite will premier its new look with our Jan. 8, 2002, issue. Some features of the new format include:

- Twice-per-month frequency with 32 pages in every issue
- Use of full-color
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TheMennonite
holy spaces
12 Turning meetings into holy ground
14 Between truth and grace
17 Meditation: not so mysterious
25 Conferences affirm new denomination

Deaths

Bender, Alvin, 81, New Hamburg, Ont., died Oct. 14. Spouse: Ruby Zehr Bender. Parents: Moses and Catherine Roth Bender (deceased). Other survivors: children Elva Poole, Ron, Shirley Dunford, Wayne, Joyce Jantzi, Clare, Ken, Tim; 14 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Bixler, Mary Yoder, 85, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died Nov. 8. Spouse: Alvin "A.J." Bixler (deceased). Parents: Moses and Lydia Keim Yoder (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Dorlee Nussbaum, Voleta Schrock, Violet Horst, Mildred Appleby, Vilas Bixler; 14 stepgrandchildren; 20 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 11 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Byler, Ruth M., 84, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 7. Parents: Jesse D. and Agnes Gunden Byler (deceased). Memorial service: Nov. 10 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Clark, Esther A., 86, Lancaster, Pa., died Nov. 12. Parents: Jesse P. and Elizabeth Groff Clark (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 16 at Kinzer (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Clemmer, Arlene Moyer, 88, Harleysville, Pa., died Nov. 15. Spouse: Russel F. Clemmer (deceased). Parents: Ida and Warren Moyer (deceased). Survivors: children Leroy, Kenneth, Paul, Ruth Ann Hartzler, Thelma Jean Whaley; 14 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 19 at Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Homes.

Driver, James, 48, Verona, Va., died Nov. 7 of a heart attack. Parents: Fred (deceased) and Ethel Driver. Funeral: Nov. 10 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Egly, Nancy J. Dunlap, 60, Perkasie, Pa., died Nov. 2 of renal cancer. Spouse: George C. Egly Jr. Parents: Lewis and Louise Graham Dunlap (deceased). Other survivors: children Eileen Braddio, George III, William; four grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 12 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Epp, Helen Peters, 101, Hillsboro, Kan., died Nov. 4. Spouse: August "Steve" Epp (deceased). Parents: Gerhard P. and Helena Hiebert Peters (deceased). Survivors: daughter Marna Tiesler; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 8 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Frey, James E., 70, Lancaster, Pa., died Nov. 7. Spouse: Betty Frey. Parents: Christ and Emma Frey (deceased). Other survivors: children Kere, Karl, Jill Wagner, Joy Martin; five grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Hartzler, Mahlon Jay, 93, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 20. Spouse: Alma Heatwold Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Simon and Magdalene Butler Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Miller, Norma Miller, Virginia Spry, Herman; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 24 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Klopfenstein, Elsie Grieser, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 10. Spouse: Alton Klopfenstein. Parents: Aaron and Mary Short Grieser (deceased). Other survivors: children Merle, Sharon Lantz, Shirley Nafziger; 15 grandchildren; 36 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Koehn, Nelson F., 83, North Newton, Kan., died Oct. 29. Spouse: Naoma Sackett Koehn (deceased). Parents: Carl J. and Lena Wedel Koehn (deceased). Survivors: children Connie Cornelsen, Janet Botterweck; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 1 at Petersen Funeral Home, Newton, Kan.

Kurtz, Anna Hostetler, 94, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died Nov. 6. Spouse: (1st) Oris Hostetler (deceased), (2nd) Mose Kurtz (deceased). Survivors: children Beverly Hostetler, Wanda Miller, Shirley Oswald, Dwane; stepchildren Edna Slabaugh, Catherine Nisly, Dorothy Gingerich, Louise Wyse, Mary Bontrager, Shirley Troyer, Alvin Kurtz, Daniel Kurtz; 13 grandchildren; 35 stepgrandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; 65 stepgreat-grandchildren; five stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio.

Landis, Mary Erma, 91, Albany, Ore., died Nov. 7. Parents: George and Fannie Landis (deceased). Memorial service: Nov. 15 at Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Lichti, Fannie Bender, 92, New Hamburg, Ont., died Nov. 3. Spouse: E. David Lichti (deceased). Parents: David and Barbara Wagler Bender (deceased). Survivors: children Harold, Nyle, Stephen, David, Wayne, Ferne Loewen, Arbutus Sider, D'Arcy; 31 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nv. 6 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Miller, Barbara Schwartz, 92, Middlebury, Ind., died Oct. 31. Spouse: Ora Miller. Parents: Peter and Barbara Schwartz Schwartz (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Marvin; six grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 4 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Patterson, Kendrick, 21, Macon, Miss., died Nov. 12 of multiple seizures. Mother: Gloria Patterson. Other survivors: five brothers and three sisters. Funeral: Nov. 17 at Fellowship of Hope Community Church.

Schmidt, Ferd, 90, Goessel, Kan., died Nov. 6. Spouse: Edna Schmidt. Parents: Cornelius and Marie Schmidt (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerol, Ronnie, Larry, Sharon Schroeder; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Shantz, Selda V., 80, New Hamburg, Ont., died Sept. 9. Funeral: Sept. 12 at Shantz Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont.

Stolifer, Albert, 66, Wichita, Kan., died Oct. 22. Parents: Albert Bradstone and Elsie Norene Clutter Stolifer (deceased). Survivors: children Denise Orpin, Brian, Tim; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 26 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Trotter, John H., 91, Canfield, Ohio, died Oct. 28. Spouse: Elsie Martin Trotter (deceased). Parents: William and Minnie Myers Trotter (deceased). Survivors: children Janice Case, Harold; three grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 1 at Leetonia (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Ulrich, Elva Martin, 87, Dayton, Va., died Nov. 9. Spouse: Richard D. Ulrich (deceased). Survivors: children Lowell, Joyce. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Vernier, Eugene Emerson, 66, Louisville, Ohio, died Nov. 9 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Gladys Yoder Vernier. Parents: Buelah Vernier, Glenn Vernier (deceased) and stepmother Dorothy Vernier (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Myra Pecora; one grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 13 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville, Ohio.

Wenger, Carlton Jay, 65, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 10 of cancer. Parents: Russell (deceased) and Esther Eby Wenger. Funeral: Nov. 16 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event. Email your announcements to themennonite@mph.org or log on at www.themennonite.org.

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classifieds

- **Mennonite Mission Network**, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA with offices in Elkhart, Ind.; Harrisonburg, Va.; and Newton, Kan., is seeking interested and qualified people to fill the following positions:

  News editor/senior writer/photographer: Manage, write and edit news content, and serve as primary writer for annual international news-gathering trips and regular domestic news assignments.

  Webmaster/editor: Manage and develop content for Internet, extranet and intranet sites. Editorial experience, ability to decide content priorities, expertise in HTML and software such as DreamWeaver.

  MVS administrators in Elkhart and Newton offices to lead and administer this important service program. Passion should be combined with service and administrative experience.

  All candidates should bring a passion for mission and service and a team orientation.

  Please find more information on our web site, <www.MennoniteMission.net>, email Rachel Stoltzfus at <Rachels@MennoniteMission.net>, or call 219-294-7523 and ask for staff recruitment.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***vice president for student life and dean of students***. This appointment begins July 1, 2002. The candidate must have solid administrative and supervisory experience in an academic environment, the ability to budget carefully and an advanced degree (doctorate preferred) in an appropriate area. The dean of students is a member of the President's Council, reports to the provost and directs the Student Life Division. The dean of students must enjoy students, be approachable, fair, work collaboratively within and across divisional lines, and be an advocate of the college in the community and the church. Strong writing and public speaking skills are required. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. The successful candidate must be a member in good standing of a congregation of Mennonite Church USA or Canada and have a deep interest in the church and its program in the world, committed to the mission of the college, an active member in congregational life, and in agreement with the mission and faith understandings of Mennonite Church USA. Applications from women and under-represented groups are strongly encouraged.

  To apply, complete the personnel information form on the employment page of <http://www.goshen.edu>, and send a letter of application, resume, a philosophy of student life, unofficial transcripts and three professional references to John D. Yordy, Provost and Executive Vice President, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7110; fax 219-535-7060; email <provost@goshen.edu>. Applications will be accepted until Jan. 30, 2002, or the position is filled.

- **Perryton Mennonite Church**, a loving, caring congregation in the rural Texas Panhandle, is seeking a full-time ***pastor***. Opportunities for growth and outreach. Interested people may contact Doug at 806-435-4558 or <ptnmenno@hotmail.com>.

- **Seoul Foreign School**, a nondenominational Christian school in Seoul, Korea, seeks committed ***Christian elementary and middle-school educators*** for the 2002-2003 school year. The school offers a competitive salary and an excellent benefit package. More details at <www.sfs.or.kr>.

  Resumes and letters of interest sent by email to Harlan Lyso at <hlyso@sfs.or.kr>.

- **Springs Mennonite Church** seeks a part-time ***youth minister*** to focus on evangelism and discipleship of our youth and community youth through personal relationships. We are a rural congregation of 300. Some seminary training preferred.

  Interested candidates may submit resumes to Beth Green, P.O. Box 21, Salisbury, PA 15558.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates May 1, July 15 and Aug. 15) and couples in 2002 and 2003.

  For information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for four part-time coaching positions beginning July 1, 2002, for the 2002-2003 academic year and beyond: ***head coach men's soccer, head coach women's tennis, head coach women's volleyball, head coach men's and women's cross country***. Planning and recruitment work could start earlier. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budgets and schedules. B.A. required, M.A. preferred with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the college level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the positions are filled.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Anita Stalter, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through our web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.15 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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classifieds

2001 index online!

The Mennonite's subject and author index for 2001 will be available online in January at www.themennonite.org.

For a printed copy, send $2 to The Mennonite, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

- **Rural Mississippi farm cooperative** seeks ***volunteers*** to drive tractor, assist minority families, staff farmers market and assist youth ministry in 2002. Mashulaville Mennonite Fellowship, 662-726-5563 or <Lardevmil@hotmail.com>.

- **COM and MBM** seek a ***director for London Mennonite Center***. This person will lead, promote, provide vision and manage staff for the LMC, host visitors, teach/preach/write on Anabaptist discipleship issues, interact with the Anabaptist Network, actively participate in Wood Green Mennonite Church. Minimum of M.Div. or M.A. in Bible or theology required. Position opens in June 2002.

  For an application or further information, call 219-294-7523 or email <DianaKC@MBM.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has the following positions open:

  Science (full-time) position includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined.

  Business administrative assistant (full-time) position assists with business and administrative detail of the school program. Accounting degree and experience preferred.

  For more information, call 540-432-4502; email <yodershi@emhs.net> or write J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***director of international education***. A 12-month administrative position, the director supervises all international education efforts at Goshen College, directs the curriculum, programming and administration for Study-Service Term; maintains links to other academic departments to foster and enhance international and intercultural education. Candidates must demonstrate ability and related experiences in program development and delivery and in establishing and maintaining relationships in cross-cultural settings. Ph.D. in academic area or international education is preferred. Demonstrable commitment to experiential learning. Second language ability essential, fluency desirable. Demonstrable management skills.

  To apply, please send a letter of application, resume and three professional references to Anita K. Stalter, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526-4795; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Responsibilities begin July 1, 2002. Women and minorities are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are also expected to share a commitment to this mission.

To renew, call us at 800-790-2498.

Canadian Mennonite University
is seeking to fill faculty positions for September 2002 in the following areas:

One in Anabaptist/Mennonite Studies
Two in Conflict Resolution Studies
Two in the Arts and Humanities
Two in Music

Please see our website for more information about these positions: www.cmu.ca. All openings are subject to budgetary approval. CMU encourages both women and men to apply.

Canadian Mennonite University is an association of three colleges in Winnipeg, committed to the biblical faith and rooted in the Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition.

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GIFTS THAT GIVE TWICE

by Gordon Houser

Here are some books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World by John Howard Yoder (Herald Press, 2001, $14.99), a new edition of a book first published in 1992, uncovers five New Testament practices central to the life of the early church: binding and loosing, baptism, Eucharist, multiplicity of gifts and open meeting.

A Year With the Bible 2002 (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001, $6.50) lists Scripture passages for each day of the year, including the weekly readings from the Revised Common Lectionary. It also includes prayers for special days.

Hebron Journal: Stories of Nonviolent Peacemaking by Arthur G. Gish (Herald Press, 2001, $17.99) reflects his experience with Christian Peacemaker Teams and records the turmoil and suffering of Palestinians, the agony experienced by Israelis and a vision of hope and new possibilities for reconciliation between Jews, Muslims and Christians.

For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care by Steven Bouma-Prediger (Baker Academic, 2001, $21.99) claims that "authentic Christian faith requires ecological obedience."

As the Waters Cover the Sea (Eastern Mennonite Missions, 2001, free) takes a contemporary look at God's call to mission and includes stories, color photos, statistics, strategic priorities and core commitments for the coming decade. To request a free copy, contact Mary Jane at 717-898-2251, <maryjane@emm.org>.

How Julia Kasdorf Changed My Life, edited by Daniel Cruz (Pinchpenny Press, 2001, $5 postage paid), consists of 10 personal essays by current and former students at Goshen (Ind.) College. Order from 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

Mennonite World Conference's World Fellowship Sunday is Jan. 27, 2002. The theme is "Walking in Unity in the Light of God." Materials for use that Sunday have been sent to conferences for distribution to local congregations. They are also available at MWC's web site: <www.mwc-cmm.org>.

Jesus the Savior: The Meaning of Jesus Christ for Christian Faith by William C. Placher (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001, $19.95) explores the meaning for today of Jesus' incarnation, ministry, the cross and resurrection.

A Visit to Vanity Fair: Moral Essays on the Present Age by Alan Jacobs (Brazos Press, 2001, $18.99) is a blend of cultural criticism and personal reflection.

Parent Trek: Nurturing Creativity and Care in Our Children by Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi (Herald Press, 2001, $11.99) is a resource to help raise children to be more creative, generous, peacemaking and joyful in today's society.

Mennonite Central Committee's 2001-2002 Resource Catalog lists videos, periodicals, posters, brochures, fliers, booklets and exhibits under various topics. It is available from MCC, 21 S. 12th St., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

God of the Empty-Handed: Poverty, Power and the Kingdom of God by Jayakumar Christian (MARC Publications, 2001, $21.95) explores the relationship of poverty to powerlessness by integrating anthropology, sociology, politics and theology.

Christ for All People: Celebrating a World of Christian Art, edited by Ron O'Grady (WCC Publications, 2001, $24.95) includes contemporary Christian art from around the world and a journey through the life of Jesus.

Recommended reading

Christmas Unwrapped: Consumerism, Christ and Culture, edited by Richard Horsley and James Tracy (Trinity Press International, 2001, $20) offers in 10 essays a historical, cultural and theological critique of the American celebration of Christmas. The writers argue that Christmas today has little to do with the birth of Christ and is instead "the religious expression of consumer capitalism." Horsley probes the biblical account to show that "the story of Jesus' birth is about the people's persistent rebellion against oppressive rule and burning hopes for liberation from imperial domination." This is a rich resource for those looking at alternatives to the annual Christmas orgy.—*gh*

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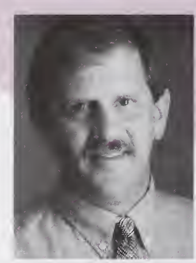

Everett J. Thomas

The mission continues

Along the way to forming a new denomination called Mennonite Church USA, language shifted from "merger" to "integration" to "transformation." Leaders deliberately changed the words for the process to illustrate how radical the changes would be. Indeed, when the new denomination is formed on Feb. 1, 2002, this new church will be significantly different in composition and structure from its predecessors.

The same will be true for *The Mennonite.* The most visible evidences of our transformation will be a redesigned look with four-color pages and a new frequency. Beginning with the Jan. 8, 2002, issue, we will publish every other week with 32 pages standard, rather than the 16 pages that has been our norm for the past four years.

In addition to pages in four-color and a change in frequency, the magazine will also be organized differently. For example, we will inaugurate a Page 2 column written by pastors and entitled "Meditation." A two-page News Digest will follow the section reserved for letters from our readers before we move into longer feature articles.

> **Equally significant changes have occurred behind the pages of *The Mennonite*; these changes will alter the relationship of this magazine to denominational structures.**

Some elements will remain unchanged, however. For the Record will continue to provide information about workers, births, marriages and deaths. The editorial will remain on the back cover.

Equally significant changes have occurred behind the pages of *The Mennonite*; these changes will alter the relationship of this magazine to denominational structures.

On Nov. 16 and 17, a brand-new board of directors met in Baltimore to create officially The Mennonite Inc. Articles of incorporation and bylaws were approved to form an Indiana corporation. As provided by the delegates at last summer's assembly in Nashville, this publication is now governed by a semi-independent board of directors. Accountability to the new denomination is formalized in three provisions: delegates to biennial assemblies will elect some members to the board and the Executive Board will both appoint other members and approve the selection of an editor.

Governance of a denominational magazine with such a board is a major change from the General Conference Mennonite Church tradition that published the old *The Mennonite* through its Division of General Services. It is equally different for Mennonite Church members who recall the *Gospel Herald* as a publication of Mennonite Publishing House.

What difference does it make how a magazine is governed? We think it makes a significant difference and are grateful that the new church provided a place for editorial freedom separate from the Executive Board and separate from a churchwide program board such as Mennonite Publishing House. However, this separation comes with clear accountability relationships to the church. Such an arrangement locates us in a creative middle-ground position that will provide its own challenges.

We will not be completely independent from the denomination, as are other periodicals such as *Our Faith* or *Mennonite Weekly Review.* Neither will we be the promotional effort for the structures, as are *Equipping* or *Missions Now.* Rather, *The Mennonite* will carry official responsibilities to help lead the church from a viewpoint separate from the structures. We intend to exercise this leadership by assigning each editor a beat that will include several area conferences and their leaders.

On Feb. 1, 2002, a new denomination will come to fruition. This new Mennonite Church USA will be evidence of God's transforming power for General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church traditions.

The evolution of *The Mennonite* is another example of how deep these changes reach. We welcome this transformation for ourselves and believe that such changes will serve the new church well. Standing in a new place in a transformed denomination, this magazine will continue its mission: to help readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

December 18, 2001

speaking the truth about Christmas

page 4

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ELKHART, IN

6 A season for giving
8 Mennonites oppose patriotism legislation
10 College responds to Goshen, Ind., shooting
16 Send in the helicopters

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The way of the cross

We want to offer our appreciation to Sheldon Sawatzky for his excellent article, "The Great Attraction" (Nov. 20). It was wonderful to see such a thoughtful rendering of the great treasure Christians have in Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection give us salvation. In a world of increasing universalism, Sawatzky made it very clear that those of other faiths do not worship the only true God. In doing so, he pointed out why evangelism and mission should not be dead in the Mennonite Church —that as believers we have the knowledge of the risen Christ, who is the answer for those seeking truth in this world. We should not be fooled into thinking that we will love people by accepting their false belief systems. Instead, we should show true love by allowing Christ living in us to continue to draw people to God and not be afraid to tell them of how Jesus' blood shed on the cross is able to reconcile them to Christ.—*Timothy & Rosalie Allen, Columbus, Ohio*

I have appreciated many good, solid, conservative articles the last while. Of particular appreciation was Sawatzky's article on the cross. It was powerful, just as the cross of Christ is. In recent years I have been greatly concerned that we seem to be leaving out the cross in our teaching. What a breath of fresh air and clear call to Jesus as the way to God through his cross. Keep publishing articles like that, and I believe your readership will grow. To see that article coming from a General Conference Mennonite Church brother is even more gratifying since our church is still struggling with joining the new denomination.—*Jerry Roth, Chambersburg, Pa.*

Sawatzky cites one of the writings of Buddhism where the Buddha foretold the coming of Jesus and urged his followers to follow Jesus. (Part of the statements attributed to the Buddha are reminiscent of statements attributed to John the Baptist.) Forgive me for doubting, but can a reference be given? I really would like to be convinced.—*Weeden Nichols, Hays, Kan.*

Editor's note: Sawatzky reports the passage can be found in the book of Phratapeedock, vol. 23.

Time-management issue

I appreciated Bill Hallsted's article, "Thankfulness in Action" (Nov. 20). I can remember acting similar to the teenager in the article after I started driving. It took four years of college education that provided me with a more global perspective before I realized how ungrateful I had been for what I had. The article helped me reflect on both how far I have come and how much further I need to go as far as being thankful.

But there was a paragraph that didn't really seem to fit in with the rest of the article. After Hallsted gives us this story on the ungrateful teenage boy, he starts to list all these examples of ungratefulness. All were applicable to most everyone's life experience except one: an ungrateful couple that loses touch with the church and God because of a new baby they had been praying for. It reminded me of how members of Congress add on amendments to bills that have nothing to do with the bill for the sole purpose of pursuing a particular agenda. I couldn't understand what not participating in church because of a new baby had to do with being unthankful. It sounded to me more like a time-management issue. I don't understand why the paragraph was even in there. I am wondering if Hallsted has had some negative past experiences and decided that he needed to preach to those ungrateful couples.—*Mike Stempel, Broadway, Va.*

Binding and loosing

Contrary to *The Mennonite*'s story ("Eastern District Disciplines Germantown," Nov. 20), the vote by Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, against withdrawing from Eastern District Conference was not unanimous. Those of us who value our relationship with the broader church needed to convince others that it is important to continue to dialogue, the "binding and loosing" referred to in the membership guidelines of Mennonite Church USA.

In the spirit of maintaining accountability and unity, conference minister Warren Tyson drove to Philadelphia to meet with a group of us before the Nov. 3 conference delegate session. We came away with a great deal of respect for the leaders in Mennonite Church USA.

At the Nov. 3 delegate meeting, some delegates heard about this issue for the first time. Because of the proxy system, some congregations were under-represented, with the result that a few people cast most of the 88 percent of the votes to discipline Germantown. Because some congregations did not discuss the issue before the Nov. 3 session, it is difficult to know how representative the vote on the proposal

theMennonite

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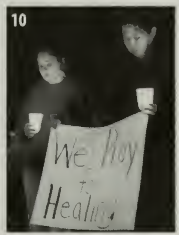
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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

actually was of Eastern District membership. *—Ruth Marino, Philadelphia*

Correction: One member of Germantown Mennonite Church voted against a motion to not withdraw from Eastern District Conference. The vote was reported incorrectly in the Nov. 20 issue.

Eastern District leaders call Weaver's ordination "in opposition to denominational statements on sexuality" because Weaver is openly gay. Which denominational statements prohibit the ordination of openly gay people? I don't think any actually do. Denominational statements say that same-sex sexual relationships are a sin, but they don't say that those involved in such relationships can't be ordained.

Even on the assumption that current denominational statements on sexuality are in accord with God's will, do we understand that only nonsinners should serve in leadership positions in Mennonite churches? I know quite a few pastors and am a former pastor myself, and I can assure you that the projected shortage of pastors in the Mennonite Church will be greatly exacerbated if sinners are banned from pastoral ministry. The obvious truth, made clear also in the New Testament depiction of the very human and sinful apostles, is that God works through sinful people all the time. In fact, they—we—are the only people through whom God ministers. For better and for worse, we're the only options available.

That's the old-time religion. It was good enough for the sinful servants of God's sinful people in the past—Moses, Aaron, Miriam, David, Peter, Paul—and it's good enough for me. May God bless and guide David Weaver and Germantown Mennonite Church in their service in the name of Jesus Christ.*—John Zimmerman, Durham, N.C.*

Cover photo
by Debra Turnrose

Speaking the truth abou

Dale D. Gehman

Thoughts on the season from a Mennonite in New York City

by Nancy Rodriguez-Lora

Christmas has always been a special time for me. I even had my first two children during the month of December. I am reminded of the great gift God gave us, his one and only Son Jesus, and nothing else measures up.

Christmas in New York City has always been a time to go out and experience new sights, relationships and adventures. From seeing Broadway shows to walking through the crowded shops, the spirit of Christmas in New York City is not like any other. My family and I traditionally take drives to all the different parts of the city, admiring the decorations and lights of many houses and streets, amazed at all the energy and money invested in the elaborate expressions of such a glorious time.

Christmas used to be a time to spend with family and friends, remembering the needy and building broader communities. As time went by, so did the spirit and true meaning of Christmas. Christmas was overshadowed by the supposedly harmless celebration of Santa Claus and his elves. Slowly but surely, baby Jesus simply became an alternate story, one not as exciting and attractive as a magical fat man at the North Pole coming down the chimney, secretly leaving gifts, somehow knowing the desires of the heart. "Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart"(Psalm 37:4).

Harmless lie: Gifts became more extravagant and self-centered. Parents, even Christians, shared and continue to share this harmless lie about Santa Claus with their children, claiming it is an innocent children's tale. Yet God's Word reminds us that there is nothing innocent about lying: "When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies"(John 8:44b).

After the tragedy of Sept. 11, we are reminded of the importance of living and speaking the truth. Thousands of lives were lost in an instant, many not knowing the truth. Hopelessness and fear captured thousands of wondering hearts. People ran aimlessly, unable to reach family and friends, due to the dead phone lines and inability to travel. People wondered why and how this happened and what will happen next.

I will never forget the terrible feeling that filled my heart as I thought about the many lives lost in just minutes. Many books of prophecy came to mind, and the Holy Spirit reminded me of God's perfect mercy. My heart sank as I thought about the many who died without Jesus in their lives, and I prayed that I might attain some understanding of what was happening.

Christmas

In the midst of this storm, God's peace filled my heart. I prayed for those still with us in this critical time. I thank the Lord Jesus Christ that my friends and family were safe, although some were shaken up because they worked in the Twin Towers or close by. I thank God I was able to hold on to my faith and trust in Jesus. Without that I would not have been able to be a source of support, compassion or strength for others.

The word "community" took on a new meaning in a city where people treasured their personal space and feared being attacked because of a misunderstood look. Neighbors who had never spoken to each other shared their pain and personal stories.

The feeling of oneness as I walked the city streets was overwhelming and new. This nation's leaders uniting in prayer and talking openly about the need for God only reaffirmed the power of the truth we as a people of God are privileged to hold. Truth has become important, especially when counseling those experiencing grief, anxiety, depression and fear.

As the Christmas holiday approaches, many are trying to get into the spirit of the season, but defining that spirit has taken on a new meaning. The spirit of "shop 'til you drop" still exists, yet not as before. Now the spirit of family, community and healing seems to dominate the hearts of Americans.

Although our nation's leaders tell us to go on normally with life, there is nothing normal about these times. God is still in control, but in no way did he cause such a tragedy, as some declare. The Word of God states, "Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8b).

Demonic force: The terrorists who crashed into the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and in the fields of Pennsylvania acted out of a demonic force called hate. The terrorists did not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, age, education or social class. Human life was the underlying target. The devil hates all that God loves, especially the human race.

1 Peter 5:8a says, "Discipline yourselves, keep alert," yet Americans were in a deep sleep, forgetting godly values, compromising America's faith and foundation. This was a wake-up call; there is no time to be unfocused as a nation or as a people of God. Although many may shake off or repress what has happened and return to the shop-'til-you-drop mentality, we must remember those who are not with us and care for those who are. Life is precious, and we need to place on our Christmas list the fatherless, the motherless, the childless, the widow and the many in need around our world.

What spirit guides us this Christmas? This year I ask God to open my eyes that I may not so much see the beautiful elaborate lights that decorate our city but the bright and courageous lives that touch our broken world. Let us shine brightly with the gospel of truth.

Debra Turnrose

As the Christmas holiday approaches, many are trying to get into the spirit of the season, but defining that spirit has taken on a new meaning.

My Lord Jesus, I pray that my light may so shine that those around me may see and feel your love, life and truth. Amen.

Nancy Rodriguez-Lora is a leader at United Revival Mennonite Church, Brooklyn, N.Y., where she serves as elder, worship team director and coordinator of an English service. Also she serves on the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA.

Advent reflections
fourth in a series

A season for giving

Returning to school at age 20 required courage and the sharing of friends.

by Tanya Chute

A humble innkeeper shared what little space remained in his stables. The fabled drummer boy shared his song. The wise men shared the treasures of their distant lands. Each offered what they had for the One who would ultimately give his life.

"What should we do then?" the crowd asked. John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none."—Luke 3:10-11 NIV

William had two school uniforms. Every morning, the uniform from the day before was carefully hand-washed and hung to dry on a clothesline slung between two mango trees. On sunny days the cotton pants and shirt were dry by noon, when William returned from the fields to dress for class and board the noisy diesel bus for school. On cloudy days the second uniform was a necessity.

William bought his two uniforms and paid his bus fare with the help of a scholarship provided by his local parish in La Ceiba, El Salvador. At the age of 20, he had made the courageous choice to return to school and begin again where he left off—in grade seven.

Like many rural youth in El Salvador, William quit school at age 15, before completing the nine years of education offered by local schools. Obliged to help in the fields from an early age, he and his peers had little energy left for studies. When he was 16, he tried again but gave up after a few months. Lounging with his friends on the steps of the church or smoking marijuana by the river was more appealing.

Then, in a distant town, a violent incident involving one of William's friends caused William to reconsider his life choices. He volunteered to teach catechism classes. He attended the parish youth group. Months later, he joined the group's leadership team.

Money: William shared his story with a new generation of youth, urging them not to repeat his mistakes. William now wished he could return to school but believed it was too late. He was too old; the younger kids would laugh at him. He had let down his teachers too many times; they would never believe in him again. The only hope would be to go to a new school, but that would require money.

A year ago, a delegation from a U.S. parish visited the La Ceiba youth group. A delegation member was impressed by William's leadership capacity and intrigued by his story. Her nephew had died of a drug overdose. When she learned that William dreamed of returning to school, she offered to help by seeking funding for a new parish scholarship.

At the same time, William's friend Julio returned from working in San Salvador and decided to enroll in grade seven in the nearby community of Las Minas. Encouraged by the prospect of studying with a peer and friend, William also decided to enroll in the Las Minas school. The effect was contagious. Soon another friend, Mario, had transferred from Las Vueltas to the Las Minas school. Wilmer, who had been planning to quit school, decided to join them.

Dying grandmother: William talked to other youth who had already dropped out, encouraging them to return to school. One of these young men, Juan, had terminated his studies to help care for his dying grandmother. Now his grandmother was gone and Juan was free to lounge on the steps of the church, but his friends were in school. He might be persuaded to return to class, he claimed, but he didn't have the money to buy a uniform.

The solution was obvious. William had two uniforms. In his moment of need, a friend had reached out to give him a second chance. The uniforms might or might not have time to dry before school. Nevertheless, Juan needed a second chance. Now five young men wait each day for the noisy diesel bus that takes them to class in Las Minas. In their matching uniforms, damp but clean, William and Juan attend school together.

Two thousand years ago, a humble innkeeper shared what little space remained in his stables. The fabled drummer boy shared his song. The wise men shared the treasures of their distant lands. Each offered what they had for the One who would ultimately give his life. In 2001, let us learn again from William the cost and the joy of genuine giving.

Tanya Chute, Gravenhurst, Ont., is a Mennonite Central Committee worker in San Salvador, El Salvador, with Yek Ineme, a Salvadoran peace-building organization. She previously worked in La Ceiba.

Christmas triptych

by Todd Davis

I.

Seven horses, steam trailing
from muzzles, graze near
a stand of cedar.
Late December light plays
across their flanks, does nothing
to melt the ice skimmed upon
the water trough.

II.

Hogs root in the 14-acre
field near the woods my parents
once owned, corn harvest nearly
two months past. Up to Smith's,
Samuel's sheep, clumped in twos
and threes, feed on winter's fading
hope, summer grasses grown brown.

III.

Far to the west, sky turns as sun
descends, illuminates the vapor trail
of a jet headed for O'Hare. Across
the way, five pheasants walk toward
the dark in the trees, knowing only
their hunger, promise of Christ's
first star.

Todd Davis teaches English at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Lora Jost

Pennsylvania Mennonites rally opposition to pending state bill on school patriotism

We have gotten involved in local political issues before, but I have never seen activity across the state in this broad a fashion.

—Dick Thomas

LANCASTER, Pa.—A bill about patriotism that turned into an issue of religious liberty has galvanized some Mennonite schools to political activity like nothing else in recent memory.

Earlier this fall, Dick Thomas, principal of Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School (LMH), was stunned to receive a call from a newspaper reporter asking for his response to a bill that had just passed the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. HB 592, now in the Senate's Education Committee, requires all public, private or parochial schools to display the U.S. flag in every classroom and to lead students daily in either the Pledge of Allegiance or "The Star-Spangled Banner." Thomas had previously not heard of the bill.

"Apparently it was introduced sometime last spring," he says. "It came out of committee after Sept. 11 and passed the Pennsylvania House 200-1, with the one negative vote coming from a legislator in Philadelphia." Several representatives are Mennonites.

Thomas, who is chair of the Mennonite Secondary Education Council, contacted John Weber, principal of Kraybill Mennonite School in Mount Joy and chair of the Mennonite Elementary Education Council. Thomas and Weber drafted an email to send to principals and school board members of the 20 MEEC and MSEC schools in the state, encouraging them to contact their legislators.

"It was very impressive the way people responded," Thomas says. "I've been associated with LMH for close to 30 years, first as a teacher and now as principal. We have gotten involved in local political issues before, but I have never seen activity across the state in this broad a fashion."

In eastern Pennsylvania, home of Franconia and Eastern District conferences, school and conference leaders discovered they had a direct link to the fate of the bill in the Senate; Joe Conti, a Republican senator for part of that area, sits on the Education Committee.

Franconia coordinator Phil Bergey arranged a meeting of Conti with school board members and administrators from area schools, Franconia conference staff and pastors. "Sen. Conti didn't need any convincing on our position [against HB 592]," Bergey says.

Conti, a native of Doylestown, in the heart of Franconia, wrote several papers about Mennonites while a student at Penn State.

People continued to join in the effort to express opposition to HB 592. Letters went to senators from Lancaster Conference moderator Keith Weaver, Atlantic Coast Conference executive committee, Mennonite Central Committee East Coast office and many individuals. Support also came from the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom.

The swift and passionate response shows that the bill struck a chord with many Pennsylvania Mennonites, Thomas says. "I think we view our Mennonite schools as extensions of the churches," he says. "To force students and teachers in Mennonite schools to salute the flag feels like a violation of who we are as part of a separate kingdom [of God]. Also, in Pennsylvania there's a long tradition, probably going back to the tolerance of William Penn, of private and church schools operating without government interference."

Thomas also acknowledged a wide divergence of opinion among Pennsylvania Mennonites. "If this bill were passed, it would be very divisive in our schools," he says.

The future of HB 592 is still up in the air. "We hope it does not come out of committee," Thomas says. "However, there are indications that [if it does], it may come out with a provision that would recognize Anabaptist schools."
—Melanie Zuercher of Mennonite Church USA News Service

Something to eat

Women in a refugee camp in northeastern Afghanistan make flatbread from food supplies provided by Mennonite Central Committee. Doug Hostetter of Evanston, Ill., recently returned from an MCC trip to Afghanistan, where he helped distribute food and supplies to people displaced by fighting in the country.

MCC photo by Doug Hostetter

Indian church reconciles after decade-long division

JAGDEESHPUR, India—A painful division in Mennonite denominational structures in India has apparently ended. After seven years with two competing executive committees, Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church (BGCMC) delegates last month came together to elect a single committee.

"Finally, it was the people themselves [who] initiated [action], and the Lord rewarded them with reconciliation. Praise the Lord," Bishop Shant Kunjam, director of the Mennonite Christian Service Fellowship of India, an inter-Mennonite agency, wrote to John F. Lapp, regional program administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The BGCMC was formed out of the work of General Conference Mennonite Church missionaries. It has about 8,000 members in about 20 congregations.

The division began in the early 1990s, when one group of leaders replaced another that had been in power for a number of years, Lapp says. In 1994, one faction failed to attend the BGCMC's annual general meeting and, in November of that year, established a separate executive committee.

"The split was not on theological issues but rather over personality conflicts, power and alleged misuse of funds," Lapp says.

Over the years, the conflict has resulted in lawsuits and weakening of denominational structures. The central church organization had been responsible for using funds from church offerings to pay pastors as well as to carry out church programs. "Since the division, many congregations have stopped paying into the central church and have begun paying their pastors themselves," Lapp says. "This has reduced the power of the BGCMC."

Prior to a special delegate meeting Nov. 15-18 in Jagdeeshpur, BGCMC leaders visited all the congregations. "In the meeting, God's spirit of peace prevailed," wrote Kunjam. "All people united in hearts agreed, among other things, to elect a new executive committee and to withdraw all the court cases within 15 days."
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

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College responds to Goshen, Ind., shooting

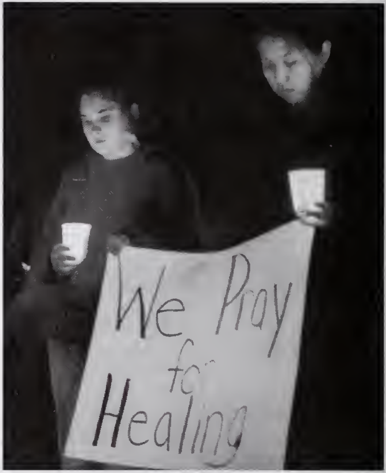
GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College responded to a Dec. 6 fatal factory shooting less than a mile from campus with prayers, grieving and promises of support.

Two men died in the widely reported attack at Nu-Wood Decorative Millworks, located in an industrial park adjacent to the Goshen campus: the assailant, from an apparent self-inflicted wound, and plant manager Greg Oswald, who was the son of two Goshen graduates, Mary Jo and Wesley Oswald of Lake Jackson, Texas. At least four Goshen faculty, staff or board members were related to Oswald.

No students or college workers were involved in the incident.

The shooting prompted Goshen, nearby Bethany Christian Schools and other local schools to keep students and employees inside until the situation was under control. On the Goshen campus, about 90 minutes after the campus was reopened at 5 p.m., about 50 people gathered for a prayer vigil.

Six students, meanwhile, went to work for the *New York Times.* Communications professor Duane Stoltzfus, a former *Times* editor, received a phone call from his former colleagues asking for help gathering information. Six members of *The Record,* the Goshen student newspaper, went to work, including two who talked with Oswald's wife before she learned of his death. Their interview was quoted at length in a *Times* story.



Goshen (Ind.) College students participate in a campus prayer vigil following the Dec. 6 shooting that left two people dead at a factory less than a mile from the school.

Goshen's campus ministries department is collecting donations to help with victims' needs and creating a giant Christmas card for Nu-Wood employees.

'Conference' on way out in Canada

Mennonite Church Canada used to have five area conferences. But not any more.

On Oct. 27, the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada voted to change its name to Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan had earlier taken similar action. The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta is expected to act on a name change in February 2002.

When Mennonite Church Canada came into existence in 1999, area conferences were invited to adopt the name "church" instead of "conference."—*Canadian Mennonite.*

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Belize church reaches across the city and the world

BELIZE CITY, Belize—Belize Evangelical Mennonite Church had 40 or 50 people. Then five years ago, the congregation decided to become a cell-based church. Today it has become Zoe Ministries with more than 300 people and reaching across ethnic lines and international borders.

Among its ministries is support of a project to send five Belizean missionaries to the Fulani, a largely Muslim people in Senegal, by November 2003. Ensford Maskall, Zoe's senior elder, chairs the effort, which includes four other congregations in Belize.

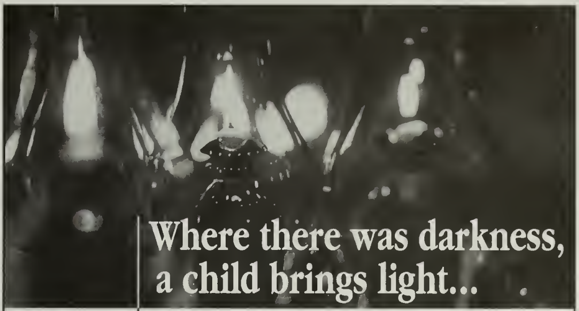
"God permitted the slavery which took our ancestors to Belize," Maskall says. "Because of that, we have received the gospel ahead of those in Senegal. We believe it is now our responsibility to share the gospel with our tribe in Senegal."

During a visit to Dakar, Senegal's capital, he says he had a profound experience. "I felt the pain of the families who were wrenched apart, the desperation of captives who broke free and jumped into shark-infested waters rather than board the slave ships," Maskall says. "God spoke to my spirit: 'You went, but now you are back. Back with new hope, freedom and good news.' "

In Belize City, Zoe has 28 cell groups operating, serving Nigerians, Taiwanese, Garifunas, Hispanics, Creoles, Haitians and mestizos. By 2015, Maskall says, Zoe has a vision of 600 cells in the city and planting 100 churches throughout the world. Zoe is also applying for registration to begin the first Christian radio station in Belize City.

Maskall says most of Zoe's membership growth does not come from other congregations but from the unchurched. Newcomers have to go through a three-month membership class.

"We want people to understand who we are," says Maskall, who had been discipled by Eastern Mennonite Mission workers. "That's where we teach Anabaptist history and theology. If Jesus took three years to train his disciples, three months is not too much for us."
—Jewel Showalter of EMM News Service



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Hesston president gets fourth term

HESSTON, Kan.—Loren Swartzendruber, Hesston College president since 1994, has received a fourth three-year term from the school's board of overseers. The unanimous action came during the board's regular fall meetings Nov. 16-17 on the Hesston campus.

The board also approved a proposed associate of science degree. Hesston already offers associate of arts and associate of applied arts and sciences degrees. The new degree would offer science and math majors a stronger foundation when they transfer to a four-year school, said Marc Yoder, executive vice president for academic affairs, and faculty chair Jim Yoder. The proposal now goes to Mennonite Board of Education for final approval.

In other business, the board adopted amended articles of incorporation and tuition, room, board and fees for 2002-2003.

Faculty, MCC staff assess peace education

AKRON, Pa.—Nearly a dozen faculty members from six Mennonite colleges in the United States and Canada gathered at Mennonite Central Committee offices Nov. 9-11 to discuss the growing number of peacemaking activities within schools and MCC.

Also participating in the meetings were MCC Peace Office staff members. Two outcomes were strengthened ties among faculty working in peace studies and new strategies for MCC participation in college-level peace-studies programs.

An example of such cooperation is MCC's annual sponsorship of 24 international participants in the Summer Peacebuilding Institute at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Meeting participants came from Bluffton (Ohio) College; Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg; Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, Ont.; Eastern Mennonite University; Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University; and Goshen (Ind.) College. Faculty and MCC staff members decided to meet annually.—*MCC News Service*

MBM India veteran dies at age 83

ELKHART, Ind.—Former Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) nurse Blanche Sell, who served in India from 1949 to 1984, died Nov. 26 in Goshen. She was 83.

Sell had promised her mother that she would always wear a covering. But a covering did not fit well with the Indian way of life. So she adopted the sari, which she continued to wear, even when working at MBM headquarters in Elkhart as director of the prayer partners ministry.—*MBM News Service*

this date in Mennonite history

Dec. 18, 1957— The government of British Honduras (Belize) extends a "privilegium" to Mexican colony groups looking to emigrate.

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Workers

Amstutz, James F.S., was installed Sept. 23 as lead pastor at Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Bontreger, Myron, was licensed and installed Sept. 30 as youth pastor at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.
Colliver, Kathy, was installed Sept. 30 as a member of the ministry team at First Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.
Jones, Dale, ended a youth pastorate Aug. 31 at Bart Mennonite Church, Christiana, Pa.
Lanting, Esther, was ordained Sept. 16 as pastor at Hudson Lake Mennonite Church, New Carlisle, Ind.
Rheinheimer, Ben, was licensed and installed Oct. 7 as youth pastor at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.
Stutzman, Benjamin S., was ordained Nov. 25 as pastor at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Versluis, Paul, was installed Sept. 30 as pastor at Shalom Community Church, Indianapolis.

Births

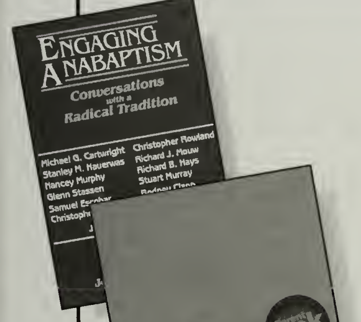
Castillo, Daniel Filipe, Nov. 19, to Julio and Marta Castillo, Norristown, Pa.
Lais, Jaden Samuel, Nov. 9, 1999, received for adoption Oct. 10 by Lynn and Jan Bryant Lais, Grantsville, Md.
Miller, Reed Harrison, Oct. 25, to Dave and Trina Steiner Miller, Kidron, Ohio.
Ocker, Julianne Rose, Nov. 14, to Dianne and Wilmer Ocker, Shippensburg, Pa.
Pfarr, Hazel Benjamin, Nov. 20, to Josh and Joanna Gentry Pfarr, Leola, Pa.
Rowley, Natalee Wilder, Oct. 31, to Larry and Karla Wilder Rowley, Colorado Springs, Colo.
Shoup, Kelsey Renee, Oct. 22, to Matt and Lisa Gerber Shoup, Dalton, Ohio.
Yoder, Jacob Mahlon, Nov. 20, to Steve and Jackie Stephenson Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.
Yoder, Katelyn Anne, Nov. 20, to Dwight and Julie Yoder, East Petersburg, Pa.

Marriages

Burroughs/Hatter: April Burroughs, Waynesboro, Va., and Joshua Hatter, Love, Va., Oct. 20 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst, Va.
Hatter/Moyer: Stuart Hatter, Love, Va., and Heather Moyer, Powhatan, Va., Oct. 20 at Bethesda Church of God, Powhatan.
Holler/Page: Beth Holler, Springs, Pa., and Andrew Page, Alexandria, Va., Nov. 3 at Springs.

Deaths

Brubaker, Lula Coulson, 81, Lancaster, Pa., died Oct. 11. Spouse: Paris Brubaker (deceased). Parents: Kersy and Edith Reynolds Coulson (deceased). Survivors: eight stepgrandchildren; 24 stepgreat-grandchildren; three stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Erisman Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.
Metzler, Isaac "Ike," 79, Harrisonburg, Va., died Sept. 23. Spouse: (1st) Lorraine Bennett Metzler (deceased); (2nd) Hazel Bennett Baer Metzler. Parents: Isaac and Laura Durr Metzler (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Dennis, Bonnie Zook, Larry Baer, William Baer, Linda Nelson, Franklin Baer; 14 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Cumberland, Md.
Schrock, Alta Elizabeth, 90, Grantsville, Md., died Nov. 7. Parents: Alvin and Amelia Miller Schrock (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 10 at Springs (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Wiebe, Maria Wiebe, 86, Beatrice, Neb., died Nov. 13. Spouse: Oscar Wiebe. Parents: Jacob J. and Anna Wiebe (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Marlene Moore, Maria Allison, Charlotte; two grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 16 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.
Yoder, Trennis, 84, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 14. Spouse: Elizabeth Bontrager Yoder. Parents: Trennis and Mary Schwartz Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Don, Joan Yoder Miller, Beth; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Goshen.



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- **COM and MBM** seek a ***director for London Mennonite Center***. This person will lead, promote, provide vision and manage staff for the LMC, host visitors, teach/preach/write on Anabaptist discipleship issues, interact with the Anabaptist Network, actively participate in Wood Green Mennonite Church. Minimum of M.Div. or M.A. in Bible or theology required. Position opens in June 2002. For an application or further information, call 219-294-7523 or email <DianaKC@MBM.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has the following positions open:
  Science (full-time) position includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined.
  Business administrative assistant (full-time) position assists with business and administrative detail of the school program. Accounting degree and experience preferred.
  For more information, call 540-432-4502; email <yodershi@emhs.net> or write J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

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Conrad Grebel University College, affiliated with the University of Waterloo and the Toronto School of Theology, invites applications and/or nominations for the position of ***academic dean*** of the college. The academic dean is the chief academic officer of the college and is a member of the college administrative leadership team. The dean is responsible for giving direction and managing the academic programs of the college, for serving as the academic liaison between the college and the University of Waterloo, and for articulating the Anabaptist-Christian perspective of the college's educational programs. Conrad Grebel University College is the Mennonite residential and teaching college of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada and offers programs of study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Preference will be given to candidates who stand within the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, who have an earned doctorate and have established themselves as excellent teachers and scholars, who have experience in academic leadership and administration and who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. All inquiries will be kept in strict confidence. The appointment will be effective July 1, 2002. Applications and resumes should be received by the chair of the Academic Dean Search Committee by Feb. 28, 2002.

Contact John E. Toews, Chair, Academic Dean Search Committee, Conrad Grebel University College, Waterloo, ON N2L 3G6; 519-885-0220 ext. 237; <cgcpres@uwaterloo.ca>.

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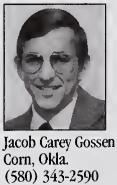

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  Send resume and a letter indicating interest and ability to meet qualifications to J. Nelson Kraybill, President, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999; <nkraybill@ambs.edu>.

- **Camp Friedenswald**, Cassopolis, Mich., seeks an ***executive director*** with the desire to work in Mennonite camping, who enjoys meeting and working with people, has exceptional organizational skills, is a good team builder, with strong financial and fund-raising competence. This person will be responsible to lead and manage the day-to-day operations of camp and to work collaboratively with all staff to carry out the mission of the camp. Responsibilities include working with the board to develop and implement vision and long-range goals, nurture relations and support with congregations and other constituency groups, develop and manage approved budgets, coordinate fund-raising efforts, hire and staff approved job positions, ensure that camp meets regulatory requirements and develop staff competencies. Qualifications include: active Christian life that embraces the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith, resonant with the purposes of the camp, ability to relate to a wide variety of ages and people, good communication abilities, effective stress manager, capable mediator, energetic, motivator and self-starter. Salary and benefits negotiable.
  Send resume to Joe Graber, 2377 E. 400 S., Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-8664 or <jgraber@adamswells.com>.

- **Mennonite Mission Network**, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA with offices in Elkhart, Ind.; Harrisonburg, Va.; and Newton, Kan., is seeking interested and qualified people to fill the following positions:
  Development associate: Half-time, preferably in the Newton office, to meet with and build relationships with donors who have primary connections with the General Conference Mennonite Church. Needed immediately.
  Service Adventure administrator to lead and administer this program for post-high school young adults. Ability to relate to, understand and communicate with young adults is key. Open in April 2002.
  MVS administrators: Immediate need in Elkhart and Newton offices to lead and administer this important service program. Passion should be combined with service and administrative experience.
  All candidates should bring a passion for mission and service and a team orientation. Please find more information on our web site, <www.MennoniteMission.net>, email Rachel Stoltzfus at <Rachels@MennoniteMission.net> or call 219-294-7523 and ask for staff recruitment.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***vice president for student life and dean of students***. This appointment begins July 1, 2002. The candidate must have solid administrative and supervisory experience in an academic environment, the ability to budget carefully and an advanced degree (doctorate preferred) in an appropriate area. The dean of students is a member of the President's Council, reports to the provost and directs the Student Life Division. The dean of students must enjoy students, be approachable, fair, work collaboratively within and across divisional lines, and be an advocate of the college in the community and the church. Strong writing and public speaking skills are required. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. The successful candidate must be a member in good standing of a congregation of Mennonite Church USA or Canada and have a deep interest in the church and its program in the world, committed to the mission of the college, an active member in congregational life and in agreement with the mission and faith understandings of Mennonite Church USA. Applications from women and under-represented groups are strongly encouraged.
  To apply, complete the Personnel Information form on the employment page of <http://www.goshen.edu> and send a letter of application, resume, a philosophy of student life, unofficial transcripts and three professional references to John D. Yordy, Provost and Executive Vice President, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7110; fax 219-535-7060; email <provost@goshen.edu>. Applications will be accepted until Jan. 30, 2002, or the position is filled.

by Gordon Houser

Continuing from last month's column, here are more books to consider buying for others or asking for as (by now, perhaps, late) Christmas gifts, again listed by subject.

Culture: *The Gospel According to The Simpsons: The Spiritual Life of the World's Most Animated Family* by Mark I. Pinsky (Westminster John Knox, 2001, $12.95) takes a fun yet serious look at one of the most popular TV shows in history. He shows how *The Simpsons* treats religion as an integral part of American life without caricaturing its characters fundamental beliefs. Pinsky, a religion writer who is Jewish, is engaging, but he seems a bit defensive when the show treats Judaism.

A more general look at television from a faith perspective is *Watching What We Watch: Prime-Time Television Through the Lens of Faith* by Walter T. David Jr., et al. (Geneva Press, 2001, $19.95). Although a bit academic, only two of its eight authors are professors. Three are pastors, and three are either writers or producers. Beginning with the premise that television is a big part of our civil religion, the book looks at situation comedies, prime-time dramas, fact-based programming and "the commerce of television." It uses history, analysis and theological reflection to help us do something television does not want us to do: think about what we are watching.

Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture by William D. Romanowski (Brazos Press, 2001, $12.99) is addressed to an Evangelical audience deeply suspicious of popular culture, but it is packed with keen observations for all kinds of readers. He writes that "the entertainment media are more influential when other social institutions are weak." He points out the popular art is often superficial because it is geared to a large audience. This can mislead us. For example, a survey showed that while *Seinfeld* ranked second in popularity among whites, it was only 54th with black audiences. Romanowski offers easy-to-read analyses of pop culture, with the goal of encouraging Christians to understand our culture and help make it better.

We find a narrower focus in *Visual Faith: Art, Theology and Worship in Dialogue* by William A. Dryness (Baker Academic, 2001, $21.99). He presents a historical account of Christians' engagement with the visual arts and chronicles the budding involvement of Christians in contemporary art. A theologian, Dryness places art in the context of our faith and is critical of the way the church often has treated artists: "There is something about attendance at church that may actually discourage the artistic imagination."

Alan Jacobs, a professor of English at Wheaton (Ill.) College, is a fine writer. *A Visit to Vanity Fair: Moral Essays on the Present Age* (Brazos Press, 2001, $18.99) shows his talent and the variety of topics he addresses, from children's Bibles to American "feel-goodism," from C.S. Lewis to Harry Potter. These "moral" essays are not moralistic.

Literature: *Speak What We Feel (Not What We Ought to Say): Reflections on Literature and Faith* by Frederick Buechner (HarperSanFrancisco, 2001, $22) is another outstanding book from one of our pre-eminent Christian writers. Buechner probes works by Gerard Manley Hopkins, Mark Twain, G.K. Chesterton and William Shakespeare. He hopes that "in listening to these four say so powerfully not what they thought they *ought* to say, but what they truly *felt*, we may possibly learn something about how to bear the weight of our own sadness."

A Book of Hours by John Reeves (Eerdmans, 2001, $16) is a cycle of poems about the life of Christ that follows the style of medieval prayer books called Books of Hours. As poetry it takes little risk, but as devotional writing it serves its purpose of helping readers reflect on the life and work of Christ.

Paternity by James Calvin Schaap (Quiddity Press, 2001, $14) consists of 11 short stories that explore themes of fatherhood.

Daily readings: Three excellent books with readings for each day of the year are *Morning by Morning: Daily Meditations From the Writings of Marva J. Dawn*, edited by Karen Dismer (Eerdmans, 2001, $14); *Inviting God In: Scriptural Reflections and Prayers Throughout the Year* by Joyce Rupp (Ave Maria Press, 2001, $12.95); and *Daily Gospel 2002* (Claretian Publications, 2001, $8.95), Scripture readings and commentary for each day.

films

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (PG), is breaking records for the numbers of people seeing it. The film follows the popular book as much as one can expect. Still, it can't compete with the book's development of character and way it builds suspense. I only hope seeing the film does not prevent children from reading the book, a much more wholesome and enjoyable experience.

Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, a Man to Match His Mountains by Eknath Easwaran (1984, 1999, Nilgiri Press, $13.95 paper) is the story of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a Pathan (also called Pashtun) of the Northwest Frontier of India. As a young man living in an area that since was divided between Pakistan and Afghanistan, he became attracted to Gandhi's teachings of nonviolence and "soul-force." Khan later mobilized the world's first nonviolent army of 100,000 men and women, a little-known story in the Indian independence struggle. Surprising as this is to Westerners, Khan said, "There is nothing surprising in a Muslim or a Pathan like me subscribing to the creed of nonviolence. It is not a new creed. It was followed 1,400 years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca." This book is fascinating reading. —*Melanie Mueller*

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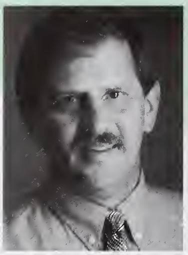

Everett J. Thomas

Send in the helicopters

GOSHEN, Ind.—On Dec. 6, an employee opened fire on his plant's supervisor and other workers before killing himself. The incident happened in an industrial park bordering Goshen College on the south and less than a mile from Bethany Christian Schools. In the chaotic beginning moments of this event, news reports suggested that 35 people had been shot.

As I worked at my computer on Thursday afternoon, Dec. 6, the afternoon traffic outside our office window slowly came to a stop. Located across Main Street from the hospital, we are accustomed to the sirens of ambulances carrying patients to the emergency room. But now there were too many sirens. Dozens of squad cars, ambulances, fire trucks and police vans rushed south on Main Street.

I have more than a passing interest in the neighborhoods in the south part of Goshen. For 10 years I have represented this district on the city council. So I called the mayor and asked him if he knew what was happening.

"Yes," he said. "We have unconfirmed reports that 35 people were shot in the industrial park."

When does a story move beyond local interest and merit national coverage?

In the next hours, every major news organization focused on our little town of 29,000. By 5 p.m., seven helicopters were circling above our heads. Incredibly, I could watch the story unfold on CNN's website, complete with a picture of the factory just a mile away.

It became clear, eventually, that 35 people had not been shot; rather approximately 35 had been working in the factory and all but seven escaped unharmed. The gunman killed one and wounded six before turning the gun on himself. His anger was apparently sparked by an argument with another man.

By 9 p.m., a local newspaper reporter was already at work on a story about the national media frenzy evoked by the early casualty estimates. He wanted to ask this councilman some questions. What did I think about the media's response? Did it make a difference that reporters thought 35 people were shot rather than seven? I tried to say something intelligent, but all I could see were those helicopters littering the sky, taking pictures that instantaneously appeared on my computer screen and on television sets around the world.

Three days later, a columnist reported that a convoy of vehicles on its way to Goshen from a "major regional newspaper" turned around and went home when word arrived that seven people had been shot rather than 35.

When does a story move beyond local interest and merit national coverage?

I have more than a passing interest in this question also. It is what we think about often as *The Mennonite* reports on difficult or tragic situations in the church. There are many interesting stories across our constituency; we must decide which ones warrant coverage in this national magazine for Mennonite Church USA. Here are two examples of stories that must be covered, according to our perspective.

A General Conference Mennonite Church congregation was placed under discipline by its conference. We published the story because the action may have set a GC precedent and because our denomination has been embroiled in debate about church discipline within new membership guidelines. A reader responds in this week's issue (see page 2).

Mennonite Publishing House, with offices in Newton, Kan., and Scottdale, Pa., is in crisis and going through a difficult restructuring. This restructuring will mean loss of jobs for some employees. However, we do not know how many will be affected. Is the loss of 35 jobs different from the loss of seven? When the time comes, we will have the difficult task of deciding how much of the story to tell.

As we follow these and other stories, we constantly discern what is important for our readers to know. The line is difficult to find; some readers will believe we err on the side of too much coverage, while others will believe we err on the side of reporting too little. Some details, but not all, deserve national coverage. The difficult discernment for us is knowing when to send in the helicopters. —*ejt*

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December 25, 2001

what aging parents really need

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Defensive position

Thank you, Barry Hieb, for a well-reasoned questioning of missile defense ("The Ethics of Ballistic Missile Defense," Dec. 4). Certainly after Sept. 11, one thought missile defense was dead. After all, the hijackers, trained in U.S. flying schools and wielding common, simple tools, used our airplanes to cause mammoth destruction. Now someone, perhaps a domestic terrorist, is sending anthrax through our mail system. No missile defense system would have stopped any of this damage. Pursuing a missile defense system of uncertain reliability seems like pouring money—a lot of money—down a bottomless hole.

Hieb mentions alternative domestic uses for such vast amounts of money. Another alternative is relief of poverty overseas. The Dec. 3 *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* notes that the United States ranks 20th in a list of "developed nations" in the percentage of gross national product devoted to foreign aid: one-tenth of 1 percent. Even Ireland, New Zealand and Italy give a greater percentage than we do. And much of our foreign assistance is given in military aid.

Poverty, it is commonly acknowledged, is one of the factors behind terrorism. More help at this point is following Christ's injunction to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.—*Edith E. Graber, St. Louis*

As a conscientious objector to warfare and taking human life, could I push the button to unleash offensive nuclear weapons capable of decimating an entire nation? Certainly not. Could I push the button to destroy a nuclear missile before it annihilated New York or Washington? Certainly yes.

A nuclear defense system is certainly the preferred ethical alternative to the current system of mutually assured destruction. The MAD system assumes that only a madman would launch a missile against a country capable of absorbing the attack and then launching enough offensive weapons, even in its death throes, to destroy the attacker. Sept. 11 proved such madmen exist. Such terrorist groups have no country against which to retaliate.

Ethically, prevention is preferred above retaliation. Yet some say that the cost of such a system will unethically drain resources from the poor or unethically break a treaty. However, one nuclear bomb on one unprotected U.S. city will do far more to hurt the poor than the creation of a nuclear defense system. Aside from the staggering loss of human life, the damages from the Sept. 11 attack would be minor in comparison, costing perhaps $1.3 trillion, or one-fifth the gross national product.

As for the treaty, the ABM Treaty of 1972 was negotiated with a country that no longer exists and under circumstances that no longer exist. As nuclear capability proliferates, renegade nations and terrorist groups—groups beyond the realm of international law or treaties—are the new nuclear reality. It is absurd to think that the efforts of the United States to respond to a new world reality and new enemies will open the door to anarchy in international relations.

I personally trust in God for my security; however, I recognize the right and responsibility of my government to provide for the common defense. If military spending is to be done, I would encourage the development of missiles that target weapons rather than the mutually assured mass destruction of people. In such a system, I could willingly participate in good conscience.—*Gary Hiller, Elizabethtown, Pa.*

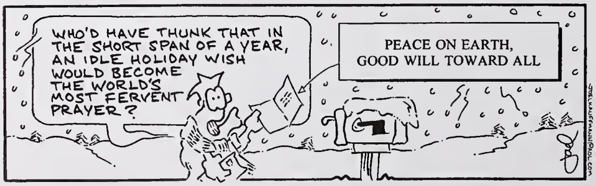
Peace perspectives

I affirm the commitment of Debbie Markiewicz (Readers Say, Nov. 20), "We need to work for peace, not just talk." There is, however, a contradiction in the preceding sentences. If it is not a printing error, then there is some misunderstanding about pacifism: "I do not want to be a pacifist. Rather, I want to be a peacemaker, as Jesus was."

"Pacifist" is the Latin root for "peace" combined with the root for "to make." "Pacifist" comes to us from the teaching of Jesus: It is the (Latin) word in Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers." We would not have the word in English usage were it not for this verse.

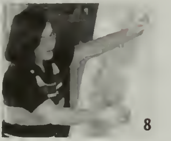
Has "pacifist" come to suggest passivity to Markiewicz? Is it that some people (Menno-

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


WHO'D HAVE THUNK THAT IN THE SHORT SPAN OF A YEAR, AN IDLE HOLIDAY WISH WOULD BECOME THE WORLD'S MOST FERVENT PRAYER?
PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD ALL
JOELKAUFFMANN@AOL.COM

the Mennonite

Vol. 4, No. 48, December 25, 2001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Incorporating *Gospel Herald* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Jan. 2, May 29, July 31 and Nov. 27 in 2001—by the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $36.75 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, the board for *The Mennonite*, Inc. or Mennonite Church USA.

Postmaster: Send form 3579 to 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683-1999.

y readers say

nites?) have identified themselves as pacifists without living out the active meaning of the word? Do we separate our prayers for peace from God's call to us to be peacemakers? Or is there some other association Markiewicz makes with the word "pacifist" that discourages her from claiming the label?

Debbie, this is our word; don't throw it away. You have a good sense of the challenge. Now be a Christian pacifist in the true sense of the word—a peacemaker.—*Rich Meyer, Millersburg, Ind.*

Dorothy Liechty raises an interesting question in the Nov. 20 Readers Say: When and how could slavery in the United States have been stopped without war? I see two ways: repeal of the Fugitive Slave Act, which would have allowed more slaves to escape more easily, and purchase of the slaves by the federal government, which would have been less expensive than fighting the Civil War. Using hindsight, it is possible to see better solutions to the problems that caused most wars in history than war itself. May we have the same foresight. —*Wendell Miller, Engadine, Mich.*

I was in the military and received an honorable discharge. I didn't do anything of note, never fired a shot but saw the bottom of many a shot glass. If I had to do it over again, I would not have enlisted in 1967. If you don't get smarter as you get older, there's no real reason to get older. The greatest power that a person possesses is the power to choose. War is just another government program. But it is easier to find a score of people wise enough to discover the truth than to find one person intrepid enough, in the face of opposition, to stand up for it.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

Cover photo
by Luke Golobitsh

What our aging parents really need

Four gifts of the Spirit that family members can give their aging parents

by Karen O'Connor

My 82-year-old mother struggled to communicate during one of my visits. "I'm losing my words," she said. At that moment, I was without words myself. I put my arm around her, and she melted into me, sobbing like a little child.

Two doctors who had conducted tests earlier in the year ruled out Alzheimer's disease, but both agreed she had old-age dementia.

Then a few months later she suffered a stroke. Expressive aphasia is the clinical term for her condition. In plain terms, she lost her ability to speak intelligibly. Few of her words are recognizable to anyone now—even those closest to her. My father, her husband and companion for 61 years, was of little support at the time because of his own challenges with Parkinson's disease.

Because of their special needs, my parents elected to live in a nursing home near my sister, their legal guardian. I live 90 miles away and can only visit them once or twice a month. As a result, I've had to work a little harder at finding my place in this new season of their lives. What I've discovered through experience and intuition is that giving care goes far beyond the daily tasks of dressing, feeding, bathing and exercising. The nursing attendants can take care of those externals. But only family members can give our aging parents what they really need—what I call gifts of the Spirit. Perhaps you will find one that resonates within you as you relate to your mother and father. And you may want to add some of your own gifts to this list.

What our aging parents long for, even if they cannot fully express it, is to be held in high esteem as people who still matter, regardless of their infirmities.

Respect: I remember as a child being reminded often to show respect, especially to elderly family members. I was not exactly sure what that meant, but it seemed to have something to do with being polite, listening when spoken to, helping when there was a need. My grandfather lived with us as I was growing up, so I had plenty of opportunities to practice respect.

Today the word respect has a new and deeper meaning for me than it did 50 years ago. Listening and helping and doing little favors are only a part of what our aging parents really need. What they long for, I believe, even if they cannot fully express it, is to be held in high esteem as people who still matter, regardless of their infirmities.

We can communicate this respect in many little ways: asking their opinion or advice, remembering their preferences for food and music and reading, encouraging them to share stories from their earlier life and really listening to what they say, doing something together such as listening to music, even baking or gardening, if they are up to it.

Respect is also being willing to look at our parents in the light of today. Infirmities exist. Bodies are frail. Minds are fragile. Emotions are often at a breaking point. Despite all these conditions, however, our parents are still individuals. They still have their dreams and disappointments, hopes and longings. And they never outgrow their need for their children—of whatever age—to show respect. They have earned it.

Understanding: "How are you doing?" I often asked my father before he died two years ago.

"I hate that question," he said. Then he added softly, "I'm about the same."

I realized what a foolish question it was. My father had Parkinson's disease for at least 10 years. Unless a miracle occurred, he was not going to get better.

Since that moment of awareness, I made a point of connecting with him right where he was—as an old and frail man. I tried to bring some cheer to his day whenever I phoned or visited, but I also wanted to acknowledge what he was going through in the moment: his discomfort with sitting, disruption when it was time for a bath, the inconvenience of getting dressed and the energy it took to bring his fork to his mouth in order to eat.

We may not be able to relieve our parents' fear and frustration, but we can walk down the tunnel with them and confirm with under-

standing words what is obvious to our eyes.

"This is a difficult time, isn't it, Dad?"

"Mom, I can only imagine how disappointing it is not to find the words you need."

Loyalty: My friend Cori says that despite her father's gradual decline from Alzheimer's disease, he still responds positively to visits from his only grandson and two great-grandsons. And he seems to relish weekend jaunts in his wheelchair to a nearby yogurt shop.

Loyalty is the simple act of being faithful to a person, an ideal, a custom or a cause. It can take many forms. We each find our own way. The important thing is that we give this gift. It is something our aging parents need.

Comfort: I remember my father comforting me when I was frightened by a bully in school and my mother standing by me as a good friend moved away. They were there for me through chicken pox and measles, during piano recitals and the school play, the night before a big test and the evening of the senior prom.

One man comforts his aging mother by recreating a family tradition. Once a month he brings a brown bag supper of hamburgers and fries to the nursing home where his mother lives.

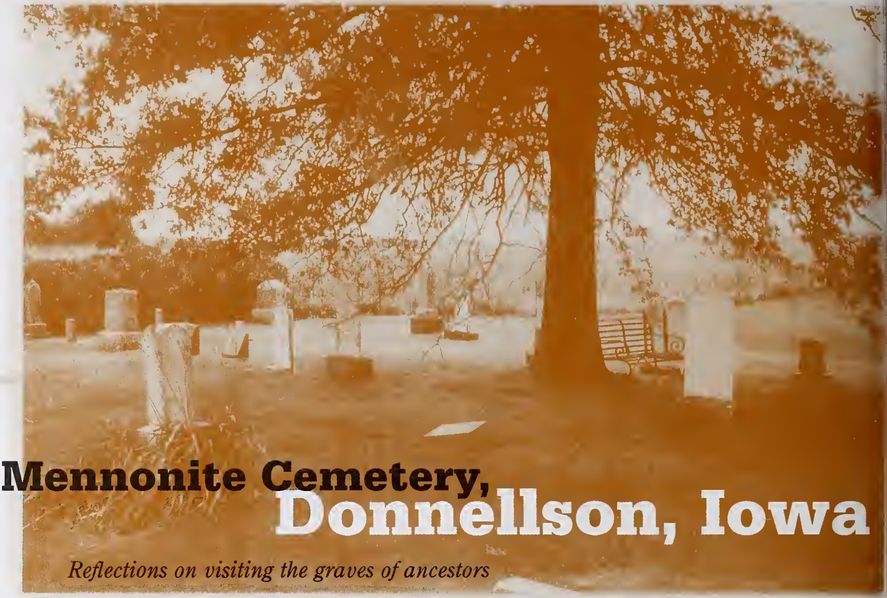
"It reminds me of when I was growing up," Walt said as we talked. "Whenever my dad was on the road for work—a couple times a month—Mom and I would go to Prince Castle for hamburgers. 'Prince Castle nights,' as she called them, became a part of my childhood. This is as close to a Prince Castle night as I can come now," he said, holding up the brown bag from a local fast-food restaurant.

We can also offer our parents spiritual comfort by praying for them, reading Scripture with them or to them and making a list of God's promises so they will have a reason to get up each morning. I made each of my parents a small Bible-promise booklet and placed it by their bedsides. Another woman attends a Scripture study for seniors with her mother once a week. A man I met includes his aging parents in Sunday worship services.

We can offer our parents spiritual comfort by praying for them, reading Scripture with them or to them and making a list of God's promises so they will have a reason to get up each morning.

At times we may find ourselves feeling weary in doing good, especially when we have commitments to our own families and careers. At these times the wisdom of Proverbs can shore us up: "Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. ... May your father and mother be glad; may she who gave you birth rejoice!" (Proverbs 23:22,25 NIV).

Karen O'Connor lives in San Diego, Calif.



Zion Mennonite Cemetery, Donnellson, Iowa

Reflections on visiting the graves of ancestors

by Elizabeth Raid

The gifts received from each of you today give courage and purpose for the journey. What verse will be written on my stone? May the answer come in the living of my life.

Speak to me, O stones. Cry out, O graves. Rise up, those who lie forgotten. As the wind blows through the mighty oak sheltering you, leave your silence and awake. Speak. Tell me who I am. What hopes and dreams did you leave unfulfilled for me to discover? What gifts have you left unused for me to explore?

Here lies great-great-great-grandfather Henry (see page 7), first Mennonite minister west of the Mississippi. Here lie Christian and Johannes, Barbara and Anna, pioneers in this land and founders of my church denomination. What common genes have come to me through grandparents: August and Laura, Clara and Harvey?

Dear Ann Marie, cousin whose sweet smile and happy laugh I remember—at age 12 stilled by polio, the years of marriage and mothering denied—what have I learned from you?

And Uncle Arlo, whose passing brought me here today—what of your gentle spirit and gracious living with those in need around the world am I to carry?

Sweet Mother—your name Pauline Victoria, so regal, so full of spiritual elegance. Come, hold my hand and rock me gently in your arms. Sing soothing songs to still my restless spirit. You left too soon—before I could give back to you enough of all the love you gave me.

Blank, unfinished is the line of date of death by your name, father kind (see photo, page 7). "Howard, leader of church and college" stands boldly on the stone. The blankness of your mind through Alzheimer's leaves unsaid all I'd wish to say to you, if you were standing near, remembering your brother, laid to rest today.

What remains when we return to dust and ashes scattered here? Which of your joys and sorrows have I not also shared? What is left for me to live that has not many times already been?

I sit in silence, waiting for your words for me.

Before I leave, I pause to read the verses etched upon your stone, dear parents: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

How can it be that these words burn deeply in my heart and often echo in my mind? They give shape and meaning to my journey as they must have to yours, somehow connecting us through endless time. Perhaps in the stillness of your womb you spoke to my spirit and placed those words upon the sacred altar of my soul long before I read them on your stone.

And what of me? Will I give gifts to those who come after, as all of you have given me? How can I doubt?

One verse remains unread. Father's verse contains the key, the answer clear. "But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (James 1:22).

The gifts received from each of you today give courage and purpose for the journey. What verse will be written on my stone? May the answer come in the living of my life.

Elizabeth Raid is a student at Earlham College, Richmond, Ind.

How connected life is!

As I researched the book I'm writing about my father, Howard D. Raid, I felt overwhelmed when I discovered this editorial he wrote in the May 29, 1962, issue of The Mennonite. *How connected life is! How generations have the same wonderings, the same questions, hopes and dreams!*—Elizabeth Raid

It was relaxing to drive the familiar roads of eastern Iowa. Memories flooded my mind of bygone days—of riding in a buggy on a muddy clay road, of sitting on the little folding seat behind the stinging tails of the trotting bays and of driving cattle along this same road. But a news flash from the car radio crowded these memories out of my mind. The United States had successfully launched a man into space. As I pondered this I came to the old family cemetery where I turned aside to contemplate the world around about me. How important was it that we had another man in space?

As I stood before the tombstone of my great-grandfather, I wondered what he was like. This man had passed on to me many of the characteristics which I possess. He had no way of knowing that I was to come into the world. He left his home country, traveled the unknown sea to a strange and wild land. He had faith that man would go on and that there would be those who would come after him who would also wrestle with the great problems of life.

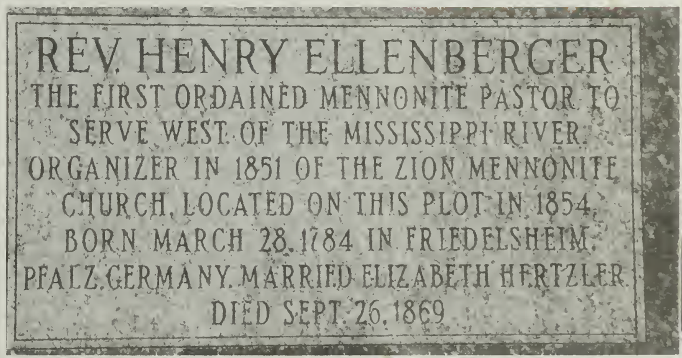
More than 100 years in this great land had done things to his children's children. All the opportunities of a great new land were to be those of his progeny. The land had changed even his name—it had Americanized it. The land provided economic opportunities so that his children's children had for their use the economic resources needed for the "good life." Even beyond the security of food and shelter they had the opportunity for education, to accumulate the learning of the ages. Greater than these was freedom: the right to worship God according to the dictates of their hearts without control by the state.

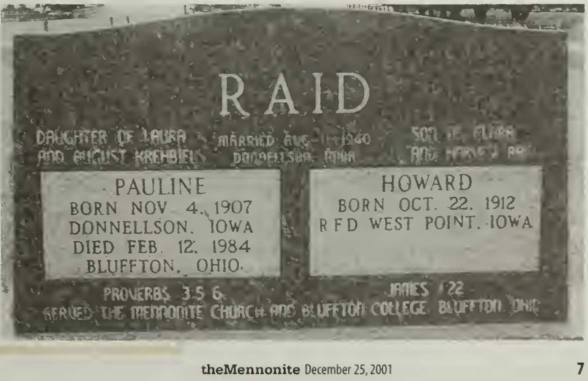
Thus I stood and pondered this man who was my forefather and yet whom I had never seen, who however determined that I was to come into the world, who influences my life beyond measure. As I thought of this I wondered why it was he came to this new land. What was he seeking? Did he find here those things he desired?

In turn I wondered about those who would come after me. Would they someday in the far-distant future stand beside my stone and ask questions like this? Would there be those who would be thankful that I, too, had lived? Would they be pleased that I in my own way had pioneered and enabled them to find the opportunities to earn a living, to secure an education and to worship God? Is this the way that man goes marching on down through the pages of history standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before him, reaching to greater heights than ever dreamed of by those preceding him? Are we now so wise in our own knowledge that we shall destroy all this good earth God in his wisdom has given us? Of what value is the man in space or a 2,000-mile-per-hour bomber unless it provides the basic needs of life, that our bodies be fed and our souls enriched?

Howard Raid was a leader in the General Conference Mennonite Church and taught business for many years at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

> Of what value is the man in space or a 2,000-mile-per-hour bomber unless it provides the basic needs of life, that our bodies be fed and our souls enriched?

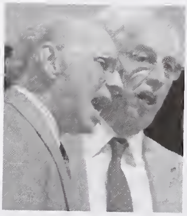

REV. HENRY ELLENBERGER
THE FIRST ORDAINED MENNONITE PASTOR TO
SERVE WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.
ORGANIZER IN 1851 OF THE ZION MENNONITE
CHURCH, LOCATED ON THIS PLOT IN 1854.
BORN MARCH 28, 1784 IN FRIEDELSHEIM,
PFALZ, GERMANY. MARRIED ELIZABETH HERTZLER.
DIED SEPT. 26, 1869


RAID
DAUGHTER OF LAURA
AND AUGUST KREHBIEL
MARRIED AUG.
DONNELLSON, IOWA
PAULINE
BORN NOV. 4, 1907
DONNELLSON, IOWA
DIED FEB. 12, 1984
BLUFFTON, OHIO
HOWARD
BORN OCT. 22, 1912
R F D WEST POINT, IOWA
PROVERBS 3:5 6
JAMES 1:22
SERVED THE MENNONITE CHURCH AND BLUFFTON COLLEGE BLUFFTON, OHIO

2001: A time to be born, a time to die

Church merger, terrorist attacks highlight passing year

MBM



Aaron King (left) and Eugene Souder, two of the original Crusaders for Christ quartet, perform during the 50th anniversary celebration of Mennonite Board of Missions' Mennonite Media program in July in Harrisonburg, Va. As students at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, the quartet started a local radio ministry in 1951. Under MBM auspices, the program became the long-running *The Mennonite Hour.*

In human history, few events are as notable as celebrated beginnings and tragic ends. That is why out of the 365 days that constitute the year 2001, two stand out—one because of a birth, the other because of thousands of deaths.

On July 5, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church delegates voted by a surprisingly overwhelming margin to transform their two denominations into Mennonite Church USA, effective Feb. 1, 2002. The actions, taken at the joint MC-GC convention in Nashville, Tenn., were the final steps in an 18-year process that was marked by tumult and contentiousness.

But the strength and similarities of the votes sparked optimism and enthusiasm. The much-debated membership guidelines were adopted by 90 percent of GC delegates and 89 percent of MC delegates. That was followed by the approval of the plan of merger by 96 percent of GC delegates and 95 percent of MC delegates.

"Today [July 5] represents an evidence of God's Spirit with the prayers of countless people and the confirmation that we have a commitment to be Mennonite Church USA and to embrace our differences and get on with our mission," said moderator Lee Snyder.

Attack response: Then two months and six days later, on Sept. 11, the actions of terrorists in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania shocked the nation. While leaving thousands dead and altering American self-perceptions of safety and security, the attacks also provided opportunities for church members to provide witness to the God of love and peace.

New York Mennonite congregations offered various types of assistance to the hurting and those helping the hurting, while a Colorado congregation opened its doors as a shelter for stranded air travelers. Constituents have rallied around the response efforts of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Schools held workshops and teach-ins to consider the tragedy, its causes and its effects. Church members have made public proclamations for peace through demonstrations, newspaper advertisements and forums to foster relations with local Muslims. The Mennonite Church USA communications office has sold 2,000 "Pray for Peace" pins, and orders are still rolling in.

GCMC photo by Kevin Miller

Eric Good Kauffman, art instructor at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind., and student Myriah Gasa work on a sign of the logo for this past summer's joint churchwide convention in Nashville, Tenn.

But like any historical occurrence, the events of July 5 and Sept. 11 will need to be measured by their effects over time. In the wake of the terrorist attacks, MDS recently hired Ruth Yoder Wenger, pastor at North Bronx Mennonite Church, to manage the organization's Restoring Hope Project. She will oversee the design and implementation of response programs made possible by more than $250,000 in contributions.

MCC's work since Sept. 11 has been affected in several ways. In addition to sending funds, blankets, comforters and workers to assist displaced Afghans, the agency had to evacuate its Akron, Pa., headquarters earlier this month when a letter arrived containing white powder. The substance later tested negative for anthrax or any other dangerous material.

In late August, less than two weeks before the Sept. 11 attacks, Afghanistan's Taliban regime expelled an ecumenical relief and development organization, including four Commission on Overseas Mission-Mennonite Board of Missions workers assigned to it.

As for the events of July 5, the official decision to create Mennonite Church USA has already drastically changed the denominational landscape. Labor Day weekend featured farewell celebrations for the General Conference Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan., and Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Ind., while the Commission on Overseas Mission had a November reunion.

Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) Inc. has already begun operation, succeeding the GC Faith & Life Press and MC Mennonite Publishing House. All the other current MC and GC agencies (except for Mennonite Mutual Aid, which will continue largely unchanged) will also pass away and be replaced by new entities. New Mennonite Church USA executives have been announced, and plans call for denominational offices to be located in eastern Pennsylvania and southern California in addition to current locations in Elkhart, Ind., and Newton, Kan.

Left and right: As evident by the delegate vote at Nashville, support for the new denomination continued to grow during the year. At the same time, fears of membership losses are slowly being realized. Some congregations have already withdrawn, taking several thousand members with them, while Franklin, Lancaster, New York and South Central conferences have opted to be Mennonite Church USA provisional members, leaving their future denominational affiliation undetermined. Puerto Rico Conference has chosen to seek fellowship with other Caribbean and Latin American Mennonites.

The new church needs to "be as fair to the people on the right as we seem to be to the people on the left," said Nashville delegate Myron Augsburger from Virginia Conference.

The ongoing issue of homosexuality and church membership took a historic turn on Nov. 3, when Eastern District Conference placed Germantown Mennonite Church in Philadelphia "under discipline" after the congregation ordained a homosexual man. It is believed to be the first time a GC area conference has disciplined a member congregation, and it comes five years after Franconia expelled Germantown, the oldest congregation in North America, because of its stance on homosexuality.

"If we didn't do something, it would look like we weren't concerned," said Eastern District president David Hersh.

Concern is also evident at the financially strapped MPH Inc., where a restructuring plan has been formulated to deal with an unsecured debt load of $3 million. The result will be the sale of the printing operation and the loss of an undetermined number of jobs. MPH Inc. earlier this year closed the Provident Bookstore in Scottdale, Pa., and cut the *Mennonite Directory* and vacation Bible school curriculum, although funding alternatives for the latter two projects are being explored.

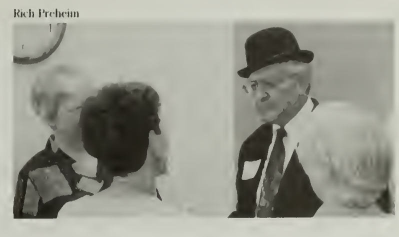
In the global church, Mennonite World Conference reported that the worldwide Anabaptist family topped 1.2 million members in 63 countries, a 13.6 percent jump since the previous census two years earlier. While the United States has the most members with nearly 320,000 and Canada is third with 124,000, about 60 percent of all members live outside Europe and North America.

In July, Indonesian Mennonites hosted a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the first Mennonite overseas mission endeavor. Dutch Mennonites sent Pieter and Wilhelmina Jansz in 1851 to what is now Indonesia.

In November, the Bharatiya General Conference Mennonite Church in India signaled the end of a decade-long rift by electing a single executive committee to replace two competing committees.

Mennonite influence was felt in the ecumenical arena during the year as well, as the World Council of Churches launched the Decade to Overcome Violence, a peace initiative proposed by German Mennonite Fernando Ens, a member of the WCC's Central Committee. No North American body is a WCC member.—*Rich Preheim*

Rich Preheim



Dale Schrag, secretary of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Higher Education Council, portrays early GC leader H.P. Krehbiel in greeting visitors to an open house at GC headquarters in Newton, Kan., during Labor Day weekend.

Canadians continue transformation

As denominational transformation reached its milestone in the United States this summer, Canadians, two years ahead of their U.S. sisters and brothers, continued work on their structures.

Mennonite Church Canada was created at the 1999 churchwide convention in St. Louis. Changes were made at the denomination's second annual delegate assembly in July. Work will be divided between two oversight bodies: Christian Formation Council and Christian Witness Council. A Support Services Council will provide infrastructure support for the other two councils.

MCC photo by Harold Wagler

Mennonite Central Committee worker Cheryl Delaplane meets with Mozambicans displaced by flooding this past spring. MCC contributed $340,000 for food and tool kits. The disaster was one of several during the year that taxed the agency's resources. MCC is contributing $2.8 million in food aid and relief supplies in response to the Afghanistan war and refugee crisis, and earthquakes in El Salvador and India prompted more than $1 million in assistance. Among other responses were help for drought-stricken farmers in Latin America and AIDS projects in Africa.

Who is my neighbor? For Goshen, Ind., pastor, it was assailant in fatal factory shooting spree

It wasn't a challenge I was excited about taking on. But deep down I knew I had to do it.

—*Teresa Dutchersmith*

GOSHEN, Ind.—On Dec. 6, Bobby Wissman shot seven co-workers in a Goshen factory before turning the gun on himself. His supervisor was killed in the rampage; two co-workers remain hospitalized, one in critical condition.

Because Wissman's family was not part of any church, his mother asked the only pastor she knew to lead his funeral: a Mennonite neighbor and pastor whom she first met only the day after the shooting.

"It wasn't a challenge I was excited about taking on," says Teresa Dutchersmith, co-pastor of Faith Mennonite Church in Goshen and who lives across the alley from the house where Wissman lived with his mother, Violet Aistrop. "But deep down I knew I had to do it."

At the Dec. 11 funeral, Dutchersmith told the group of 100, including several estranged family members: "In God's love your broken hearts will be mended. Nothing, nothing, nothing will be able to separate you from God's deep and unending love."

She also told how she had come to be involved in the service. "I knew and talked to Bobby but did not know his mother," Dutchersmith said. "The morning after the event, I felt compelled to talk to her. I invited another neighbor, and we knocked on the door. We were warmly welcomed, and fortunately there was no press around for the first half-hour."

Dutchersmith

Later that day, the chaplain at Goshen General Hospital called Aistrop to ask whether she knew a pastor who could lead the funeral service for her son. Coincidentally, the chaplain, Clair Hochstetler, is also an elder at Faith.

Aistrop turned to Dutchersmith. "They didn't have any church connection, and they couldn't think of anyone to call," Dutchersmith says. "No other clergy-type people had contacted them."

The funeral became a time of reconciliation for members of Wissman's family who had been estranged for nearly a decade. Several came forward and embraced Aistrop, their

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stepmother, during an extended period of sharing and silence.

"The last time I seen Bobby was at Dad's funeral [in 1992]," said sister Susan Wissman. "I wish I could turn back the hands of time to be there for you."

Erika Wissman, another sister, was moved to reach out to Wissman's brother Junior, her stepbrother, saying, "Junior, we want to establish a relationship with you."

Dutchersmith intends to stay connected with the family and says several members have expressed interest in visiting Faith.

"Whether or not they visit the congregation, after being invited into their family, I need to have at least a year of follow-up" she says. "The deep grieving goes on for much longer than a year."

Another process that will continue is one of reconciliation with the family of Greg Oswald, the factory supervisor killed by Wissman.

"The hard, awkward and courageous work of having direct contact with each other has begun," Hochstetler says. "Our congregation's leaders offered to bear the first messages of prayer and support, remorse and regret, from the Wissman family to the community and between the two families."

Faith Mennonite Church was begun as a church plant in 1990 by Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, and the two congregations share a church building. Dutchersmith says Faith wants to reach people without a Mennonite background and without a church background. Attendance is 60 to 80 for Sunday evening worship and a fellowship meal.
—Everett J. Thomas

CPT duo exploring Afghanistan work

CHICAGO—Christian Peacemaker Teams has sent director Gene Stoltzfus and Canadian coordinator Doug Pritchard to Asia to investigate possibilities for a CPT presence in Afghanistan.

Stoltzfus and Pritchard left New York City for Peshawar, Pakistan, on Dec. 16 on a monthlong trip. From Pakistan, Stoltzfus and Pritchard hope to enter Afghanistan, although they expect complications in trying to do so because of the political instability and uncertainty.

Before leaving, Stoltzfus and Pritchard, accompanied by CPT supporters, held a prayer vigil and commissioning at Ground Zero, the site were several thousand people died as a result of the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

"For many years, people in countries around the world have lived under the threat of violence, often from U.S.-supplied arms," Stoltzfus says. "That threat has now come home. And it places all of CPT's violence-reduction work in a new context and underlines its urgency."

Stoltzfus and Pritchard are scheduled to return Jan. 14, 2002. While in the region, they will visit with individuals and groups involved in humanitarian and peace efforts.—*CPT News Service*

Corrections: The work of the Commission on Overseas Mission will be assumed by Mennonite Church Canada as well as by Mennonite Mission Network of Mennonite Church USA. COM's future status was reported incorrectly in the Nov. 6 issue.

Sixth-graders at Bethany Christian Middle School in Goshen, Ind., are seeking Afghan pen pals. The school was misidentified in the Dec. 4 issue.

Clarification: Church World Service's new clergy training program in trauma counseling is in partnership with the Conflict Transformation Program of Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.

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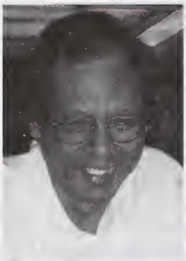
MWC leader to help in Indonesian strife

Four Mennonite churches destroyed by Muslim forces



Krisetya

STRASBOURG, France—As interfaith violence has again flared in Indonesia, a Christian group has called on Mennonite World Conference (MWC) president Mesach Krisetya to help address the situation.

At the invitation of the Christian Church of Central Sulawesi, or GKST, Krisetya, a longtime Indonesian Mennonite leader, next month will conduct weeklong trauma counseling workshops for pastors and volunteers working with 16,000 Christian refugees in the city of Tentena.

Since this fall, at least 70 Christian churches have been burned by Muslim forces on the island of Sulawesi. Among the casualties have been four churches of the GKMI synod, the second-largest of Indonesia's three Mennonite groups.

PIPKA, the GKMI mission board, is gathering aid for the refugees in Tentena.

Muslim-Christian clashes have ravaged the region for nearly three years following a large-scale Muslim migration to what previously was a predominantly Christian area. An estimated 7,000 people have been killed and half a million driven from their homes.

Krisetya, MWC president since 1997 and a former pastor, is head of the department of pastoral care of Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Indonesia, and has been active in the International Council on Pastoral Care and Counseling. He holds a master's degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., and a doctorate from the School of Theology in Claremont, Calif.—*MWC News Service*

Hesston College receives reaccreditation for another 10 years

HESSTON, Kan.—The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has reaccredited Hesston College for 10 years. An NCA site review team visited the campus in March, and a final report was issued last month.

The site review team noted a number of strengths, including sense of community, physical plant, technology upgrades, relationship with the city and faculty development.

But the NCA will make a "focus visit" during the 2003-2004 academic year to review progress in the areas of faculty involvement in curricular matters and the integration of strategic planning and budgeting.

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Bethel student wins peace speech contest

AKRON, Pa.—A Bethel College student recast the popular phrase "What Would Jesus Do?" into "What Would You Do for Jesus?" to take first place in the 2001 C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest.

"When we shelter the refugee, when we love the victimizer, when we cherish the hardened, when we provide for the needy, so we shelter, love, cherish and provide for Jesus," said Amanda Ediger, a senior at the North Newton, Kan., school, in her winning speech, "Revising 'What Would Jesus Do?' "

Second place went to Zachary J. Walton, a senior at Bluffton (Ohio) College, who spoke on "The Rumor of War and the Promise of Peace: Imagining a Nonviolent Christian Eschatology." Kendra Loewen, a second-year student at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg, took third with "Hello, I Love You."

The annual contest, administered by Peace and Justice Ministries of Mennonite Central Committee U.S., is open to students at every Mennonite and Brethren in Christ college in North America. The top three speakers will receive cash prizes and scholarships to peace-related conferences or seminars. The contest is named for the late Mennonite historian and professor at Bluffton and Goshen (Ind.) colleges.—*MCC News Service*

Professor, pastor, peace worker dies at age 86

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Donovan E. Smucker, General Conference Mennonite Church pastor and professor at several Mennonite schools, died Dec. 13 in Bluffton. He was 86.

A Bluffton native and 1936 graduate of Bluffton College, Smucker in 1938 went to Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., to serve with the school's Kansas Institute of International Relations. In 1941 he joined the staff of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, first in New York and then in Chicago.

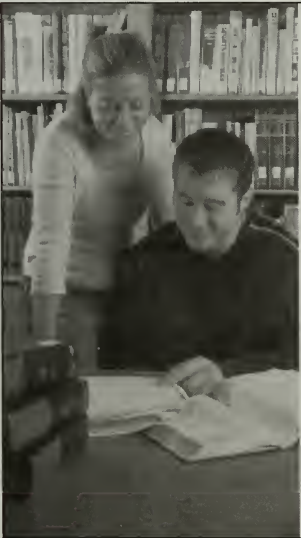
Smucker started his teaching career in 1947 as professor of ethics at Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, where he stayed eight years. He also taught at Lake Forest (Ill.) College and was president of Mary Holmes College, an African-American school in West Point, Miss. From 1970 to 1981, Smucker was professor of social sciences and conflict studies at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont. His books include *The Sociology of Canadian Mennonites, Hutterites and Amish.*

In addition to his academic career, Smucker pastored Mennonite congregations in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Kansas.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara, three children, seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

this date in Mennonite history

Dec. 25, 1884—Kansas Mennonites meet at Moundridge for their first Sunday school convention.



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Events

100th New Year's Day Harmonia Sacra Singing, Jan. 1, 2002, at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va. For information, call 540-434-7758; http://weavers.us.mennonite.net.

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classifieds

- **Rural Mississippi farm cooperative** seeks ***volunteers*** to drive tractor, assist minority families, staff farmers market and assist youth ministry in 2002. Mashulaville Mennonite Fellowship, 662-726-5563 or Lardevmil@hotmail.com.

- **COM and MBM** seek a ***director for London Mennonite Center***. This person will lead, promote, provide vision and manage staff for the LMC, host visitors, teach/preach/write on Anabaptist discipleship issues, interact with the Anabaptist Network, actively participate in Wood Green Mennonite Church. Minimum of M.Div. or M.A. in Bible or theology required. Position opens in June 2002.

  For an application or further information, call 219-294-7523 or email DianaKC@MBM.org.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School** has the following positions open:

  Science (full-time) position includes teaching biology, biology II and one course to be determined.

  Business administrative assistant (full-time) position assists with business and administrative detail of the school program. Accounting degree and experience preferred.

  For more information, call 540-432-4502; email yodershi@emhs.net or write J. David Yoder, Eastern Mennonite High School, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **Camp Friedenswald,** Cassopolis, Mich., seeks an ***executive director*** with the desire to work in Mennonite camping, who enjoys meeting and working with people, has exceptional organizational skills, is a good team builder, with strong financial and fund-raising competence. This person will be responsible to lead and manage the day-to-day operations of camp and to work collaboratively with all staff to carry out the mission of the camp. Responsibilities include working with the board to develop and implement vision and long-range goals, nurture relations and support with congregations and other constituency groups, develop and manage approved budgets, coordinate fund-raising efforts, hire and staff approved job positions, ensure that camp meets regulatory requirements and develop staff competencies. Qualifications include: active Christian life that embraces the Anabaptist-Mennonite faith, resonant with the purposes of the camp, ability to relate to a wide variety of ages and people, good communication abilities, effective stress manager, capable mediator, energetic, motivator and self-starter. Salary and benefits negotiable.

  Send resume to Joe Graber, 2377 E. 400 S., Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-8664 or jgraber@adamswells.com.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***vice president for student life and dean of students***. This appointment begins July 1, 2002. The candidate must have solid administrative and supervisory experience in an academic environment, the ability to budget carefully and an advanced degree (doctorate preferred) in an appropriate area. The dean of students is a member of the President's Council, reports to the provost and directs the Student Life Division. The dean of students must enjoy students, be approachable, fair, work collaboratively within and across divisional lines, and be an advocate of the college in the community and the church. Strong writing and public speaking skills are required. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. The successful candidate must be a member in good standing of a congregation of Mennonite Church USA or Canada and have a deep interest in the church and its program in the world, committed to the mission of the college, an active member in congregational life, and in agreement with the mission and faith understandings of Mennonite Church USA. Applications from women and under-represented groups are strongly encouraged.

  To apply, complete the Personnel Information form on the employment page of http://www.goshen.edu, and send a letter of application, resume, a philosophy of student life, unofficial transcripts and three professional references to John D. Yordy, Provost and Executive Vice President, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7110; fax 219-535-7060; email provost@goshen.edu. Applications will be accepted until Jan. 30, 2002, or the position is filled.

2001 Index online!

The Mennonite's subject and author index for 2001 is available online at www.themennonite.org. For a printed copy, send $2 to *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

by Rich Preheim

Kitsch for cash

Christmas season is, of course, also the shopping season. And Christians naturally find themselves often looking for presents in Christian bookstores, where 44 percent of sales nationwide are Bibles and books. But 20 percent of sales are in gift ware, such as Veggie Tales videos, WWJD yo-yos and toy cars proclaiming, "You Auto Know Jesus."

The question, asks *Faith Today,* is whether such items are treasure or trash.

"We need new ways to get the Word of God to people," says Brent Hackett, whose company distributes the popular Testamints—breath mints wrapped in Bible verses. "As long as [a product] is done professionally and it doesn't take away from the Word of God, then I don't personally have a problem with it."

Others do have problems with it. Bernard Sobert understands the need to translate the Christian message into understandable forms for nonreligious society. "But I believe as a Christian and also as a business professor that we've crossed the line somewhere," he says.

For Sobert, that line was Bibleman, a children's action figure. "It was very muscular, and it had all the armor," he says, noting the connections between such types of toys and violence.

Sobert wonders about the purpose of Christian kitsch. Is it to further the gospel or produce a profit?

The answer is the former for Bill Heiland, who manufactures fortune cookies stuffed with Scripture verses. "It started out as kind of a ministry to me," he says. "It still is. We haven't raised our prices in 11 years."

Throwing the book at them

While Christian bookstores draw criticism on this continent because they may be too much like popular culture, a Christian bookstore is drawing attention in Turkey because it is so different.

After eight years of trying, Kaya Esen this past summer finally received government permission to start the first Christian bookstore in the predominantly Muslim country, reports *ChristianWeek.* Government officials made several stipulations: The bookstore sign must be written in English as well as in Turkish, and literature must be sold rather than given away.

Esen, a pastor, insisted that his venture be called "Bible Bookstore." "Any Muslims who pass by will know that this is a place where they can buy a Bible," he says.

Something in the air

Money talks. So do televangelists. And some televangelists spend more than 20 percent of their time talking about money, according to a study in *Christianity Today.* Leading the way were Oral and Richard Roberts, who dedicated 27 percent of their airtime to requesting money, followed by James Robison with 23 percent, Jerry Falwell with 22 percent and Robert Tilton with 21 percent.

Of the 20 television ministries surveyed, Falwell also devoted the least time to ministry, spending only 44 percent in preaching, prayer, music and testimonies. The rest of his broadcasts went to self-promotion (27 percent) and politics (7 percent). The show with the next lowest percent of ministry airtime was *The 700 Club* at 52 percent, which spent 34 percent of its time on politics, such as the Middle East situation.

Others with low percentages of airtime on ministry were Robison and Tilton, both 58 percent, and the Robertses, at 68 percent.

On the other end of the scale were Charles Stanley, *Praise the Lord* and *Day of Discovery,* all with 95 percent or more of their time devoted to ministry. *Day of Discovery* was one of two shows (along with *Tomorrow's World*) that didn't spend any time fund raising. *Praise the Lord* devoted 1 percent and Stanley 2 percent.

The survey average was 77 percent of airtime on ministry, 11 percent on fund raising, 8 percent on promotion and 4 percent on politics.

Pick a number

Islam and its adherents continue to be prominent in our collective consciousness following the events of Sept. 11. But that has generated confusion over exactly how many Muslims are in the United States.

Sightings reports that in 1986, the Saudi embassy claimed 10 million Muslims in this country. But a 1990 survey counted 1.3 million. A Pakistani paper in 1998 put the number at 12 million. The 1996 edition of the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* counted 527,000 American Muslims, but two years later raised that figure to 3.3 million, a sixfold jump.

Now comes the American Religious Identification Survey 2001, which polled 50,000 people and concluded that 1.8 million Americans are Muslim. Meanwhile, a University of Chicago researcher calculated the U.S. Muslim population to be between 1.8 million and 2.8 million. But both findings have come under attack from Muslim leaders.

Tidbits

- A duet rendition of "Silent Night" is scheduled to be recorded by Tammy Faye Bakker and shock-rocker Marilyn Manson.—*The Christian Century*
- The bakery at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Ga., makes and sells about 12,000 fruitcakes a year.—*National Catholic Reporter*
- "In God We Trust" first appeared on U.S. coins in 1866 and has appeared on all coins since 1938.—*AFA Journal*
- Vatican City, the world's smallest city-state, recently ratified the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. —*Sojourners*
- Due to world events and low registration numbers, the Evangelical Press Association has moved its 2002 convention from Jerusalem to Colorado Springs, Colo.— *Wireless*

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Gordon Houser

Imagine

The wolf shall live with the lamb.—Isaiah 11:6a

We go about our daily lives. We get up each morning, get dressed, eat breakfast, go to school or work, come home, eat, watch TV, go to bed. At some point we need someone to say, "Wake up!"

That's what prophets do. In the midst of the Bible's story of God's dealing with various people we find messages from prophets that show us things we might not have imagined. And if we can't imagine something, we won't make it happen. You might say, You can't be what you can't see.

Many of our Mennonite congregations are using *Builder* as a guide for planning worship during the six Sundays of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. The overall theme for these Sundays is "Tears of Judgment—Streams of Restoration."

In these days, as we weep over the destruction in our world and as we search for signs of hope, we need our imagination restored.

One of the Scripture readings for Dec. 9 was Isaiah 11:1-10. This prophet describes a scene few could have imagined: wolves and lambs, leopards and kids, calves and lions all living together in peace on God's holy mountain.

Can we imagine a world without predators or prey? Until we can, the devouring will continue.

I would guess that this prophet received harsh criticism for being so "unrealistic." He probably heard people say, "Dream on. Predators and prey will not get along."

Sound familiar? Pacifists are getting raked over the coals, castigated as ignorant, uncaring and, of course, unrealistic. Never mind that so-called realistic military solutions have failed to bring anything close to what Isaiah describes.

Can we imagine a world without predators or prey—not just wolves and lambs but bullies and bullied, HMOs and uninsured patients, nuclear weapons and starving children? Until we can imagine such a world, the devouring will continue.

Let's get personal for a moment. How are you either prey or predator? How am I?

I am prey to the largest religion in North America: consumerism. It has temples (malls) in every city, shrines (TVs) in every home, and it is constantly after me to sacrifice to its god, greed. I have a hard time imagining being free of this predator.

I am also a predator.

Who is my victim? This planet, God's beloved Earth. I poison its air with the car I drive. I use up more than my share of resources with hardly a thought. I waste precious water and help fill landfills with stuff that will not simply disappear. Can I imagine not being such a predator?

In another reading from Dec. 9, the prophet John the Baptist calls his hearers to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 3:2). "Repent" means to change one's mind, one's direction. You might also say it means to imagine something different.

Most of John's hearers were prey, under the severe yoke of Rome. When they heard John say "kingdom of heaven," they knew that meant God was coming to rule, which meant the predator Romans would no longer be in charge. These people needed to repent of their hopelessness and imagine being free.

In his camel's hair and leather belt, John might not have appealed to many of us. With his denunciation of religious leaders as a "brood of vipers" (predators), he doesn't sound like a pleasant man to be around.

Often prophets are not very appealing or nice. But remember, their job is to wake us up. They tell us we can't just keep going along like we have. Something has to change.

They also point us to the One who can bring that change, to "the root of Jesse," who "shall stand as a signal to the peoples" (Isaiah 11:10). They point to the one who "will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matthew 3:11b).

This is the one whose birth we celebrate on this Christmas Day. This is "the little child" Isaiah mentions, who will lead us out of our roles as predators and prey and into a kingdom where no one hurts and destroys, "for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

Imagine that.—*gh*

The next issue of *The Mennonite*, dated Jan. 8, 2002, will be printed in full color and will begin our new pattern of publishing twice each month instead of weekly.

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